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ABSTRACT

Eleven focus groups, representing a broad range of Iowa thought, met in five Iowa cities in 1993 to talk about programming for students with behavioral and emotional problems. Participants viewed four videotapes of students with behavior problems, discussed what their schools would most commonly do to serve the students, and explored what their schools would do to offer the best possible programming given all desired resources. Small groups identified the three interventions, in his/her opinion, that would most typically be used for the students and the three most desirable interventions. Individuals then assigned grades to schools' performance in serving students with behavioral needs, and these grades were reported to small homogeneous groups and averaged. Ideas generated in group meetings were categorized into 19 theme areas: parent involvement, the role of academics, resources, social and emotional needs of students, staff education and training, community support, professional support, nonprofessional educators' support, parent training, school and district policy, regular education, identification and diagnosis, behavior management, teamwork, early identification and service, special education, special schools, students' negative behaviors, and students' positive behaviors. Analysis of these themes resulted in identification of the following major themes: parent involvement, curriculum transformation, roles of special and general education, teamwork, alternative school programming, and resources. Appendices contain detailed focus group data. (JDD)

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# Focus Group Project
# Iowa Behavioral Initiative

**Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center**
**Des Moines, Iowa**
**1993**

EC 303095

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# Focus Group Project
# Iowa Behavioral Initiative

**Polly Nichols and Sally Pederson, Facilitators**

**Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center**
**Des Moines, Iowa**
**1993**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
# FOCUS GROUP PROJECT

## The Focus Groups

Focus Groups are discussion groups of eight or so people who have a profession, status, or interest in common. Eleven such groups met in five Iowa cities during the spring and fall of 1993 to talk about programming for students with behavioral and emotional problems. They represented a broad range of Iowa thought on the issues of programming for students with behavioral difficulties, both those identified for BD services and those in mainstream education: regular education; all levels of special education, from the least to the most restrictive settings; both smaller and larger school districts; elementary and secondary school, early childhood, and alternative high school groups; LEA teachers; AEA support staff; parents of identified and non-identified students with behavior problems; and a sample of students themselves. Group meetings were two hours long. Seated around a long table, the participants viewed four short video clips of students with behavior problems. Scenarios were read aloud giving their histories and main characteristics. Three were boys, a junior and a senior high student with conduct problems and an active preschooler with attention problems and odd screaming behavior. The fourth was a high school girl who, though gifted, was depressed, truant, and flunking out. The stories we invented to fit these students were focused on school problems; their parents were described in neutral terms, and none of their problems were readily attributable primarily to poor home environments.

For each story, group members were asked to discuss these questions:

1. **What would your schools most commonly do now to serve this student?**
2. **What would they do to offer the best possible programming, given that they had all the resources they needed or wanted?**

Following these discussions, the group was divided into smaller groups, each one assigned a scenario. They were asked to combine thinking about their assigned student and to select from their lists the three interventions that would most typically be used now for that student and the three that would be most desirable. They shared these with the larger group.

As a final activity, group members were asked to write down their ideas individually. In addition to the two guiding questions above, they were to answer the two following questions:

3. **Based on how schools serve all students with behavioral needs, what grade would you give to their performance?**
4. **What would schools need to do to move that up to an A?**

Groups were formed in the homogeneous categories listed below. The average grade and the range of grades given is listed with each group.

- **nine teachers from self-contained BD classrooms** for students who receive instruction in mainstream classes primarily only for art, music, and PE met in Storm Lake; *Grade range, B to C-; Average, C+*
- **eight teachers from early childhood special education classrooms** met in Des Moines; *Grade range, no grade to B; Average, B*
- **five teachers from multi-categorical self-contained-with-integration (SCI), resource, or complete mainstream (RSDS) programs** met in Iowa City; *Grade range, C+ to C-; Average, C+*
- **nine teachers from self-contained BD classrooms** for students who receive instruction mainstream classes usually only for art, music, and PE met in Storm Lake; *Grade range, B+ to C-; Average, C+*
- **eight teachers from classrooms for more severely involved BD students in self-contained classrooms** set in schools or in more restrictive settings such as on a psychiatric unit, in a non-school building, or in a vocational training facility met in Iowa City; *Grade range, B to F; Average, C*
- **seven institutional educators from Iowa's most restrictive settings** which house their own schools—psychiatric hospitals, treatment facilities, shelters, and short-and long-term detention facilities—met in Des Moines; *Grade range, B to D; Average, C+*
- **seven school administrators and counselors** met in Ottumwa; *Grade range, B to C+; Average, B-*
- **eleven AEA social workers, school psychologists, and consultants** met in Storm Lake; *Grade range, B to D-; Average, C*
- **seven mothers of students identified and receiving services** on the basis of having a behavior disorder or autism met in Iowa City; *Grade range, B to D; Average, C*

- **ten parents of non-identified students** from one elementary school whose children have behavioral difficulties and are receiving school support as regular education students met in Iowa City; Grade *range, B to D; Average, C+*
- **ten high school students from an alternative school** who had formerly attended regular education classrooms met in Iowa City;
  *Grade range, Regular High School, C to F; Average, D*
  *Grade range, Alternative High School, no grade to A; Average, A-*
  *(They chose to grade both their school and the schools it is alternative to.)*

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Group meetings were generally lively and stimulating, and the activities generated hundreds of ideas. After they were transcribed, sorted, grouped, and regrouped, we identified 19 themes or key elements by which they could be categorized:

1. **Parents: involvement of parents** with the schools in a shared enterprise of fostering children's growth and learning. Parental involvement was listed more often than any other element of ideal programming, 99 times. Teachers and administrators want increased involvement with parents; parents want increased involvement, too, as *equal* partners who are neither patronized nor blamed.

2. **The role of academics:** the curriculum, graduation requirements, grading, groupings--the content and procedures of education. The need for reform in academic and curriculum was listed as a major element of the ideal 80 times. Participants saw the need for *major* new curriculum components, academics, and nontraditional arrangements to meet today's challenges

3. **Resources: time, money, staff, facilities**—the wherewithal necessary for ideas to materialize into programs. Greater resources of many kinds were listed as key elements of ideal programming 71 times. The final comments of this summary are on the subject of resources—equity, time, training, and facilities.

4. **Social and emotional needs of students:** helping them with their thoughts and feelings, their personal and interpersonal conflicts. Social skills training was viewed as being an essential component of programming by all special education teachers. Elements of general emotional support—dealing positively

with students, dignifying them, recognizing their uniqueness and their talents, hugging the little ones, focusing on their strengths—were frequently cited. Supportive individuals were seen as crucial for positive school experiences. Parents were particularly aware of the differences in their children's behaviors when they really liked their teacher, when he or she is dynamic, energetic or, as the AEA people said, creative and flexible.

5. **The education and training of school staff:** regular education teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, bus drivers, associates—*everyone* was seen as needing more training to deal effectively with behaviorally disordered students. Inservice, pre-service, and training in general comprised the fifth ranking element of ideal programming with 58 nominations by group participants; only one group, the general education teachers, did not mention the need for teachers to receive training.

6. **Support and involvement from community resources:** human services agencies, mental health centers, recreational facilities, businesses, probation and police departments, youth agencies, medical facilities, and the business community were among those desired as important working partners with schools. Adults to establish relationships with students as mentors and guides into the adult work world were frequently mentioned as being urgently needed.

7. **Professional support within the school domain:** from AEA social workers, consultants, and psychologists as well as from school counselors and behavior interventionists, transitions specialists, and case managers. All students with emotional and behavior problems—regular or special education—should have support services; BD teachers find it unrealistic to stop support once a child is identified and placed in a self-contained program. Students with problems were generally viewed as needing counseling once or even twice a week.

8. **Support from nonprofessional educators:** within the school community, chiefly from trained aides or associates but also from a variety of students and adults who serve as mentors, counselors, or general support people for students. This

awkward term labels a group of important contributors to educational programming, the volunteers or paid helpers who in many ways enrich the school experience. Altogether, such resources were mentioned 31 times in summaries.

9. **The training and education for parents:** training for their role in consistent programming and about parenting techniques in general. Parent training was referred to globally simply as that, *parent training*, in almost all instances. What parents were to be trained to do, how the training was to be accomplished and to what end were not fully articulated. Regular education teachers made recommendations in this category more frequently than they made any other kind of recommendation. Some teachers felt so strongly about this need that they believed that for students to remain in school, parents should be held accountable for attending classes, even if they had to miss work to do so.

10. **Issues of school and district policy:** basic principals or procedures that were articulated as policy and carried out throughout an entire system . One policy area looked forward to was broader general recognition of the needs and problems in BD programming, by school people and the entire community. The lack of policy on how schools would handle discipline issues, especially violent behavior, was noted and was a particular concern of regular education teachers.

11. **Regular education:** as the home-base for students and programming. Regular education issues were named as a critical element of ideal programming exactly twice as often as were special education issues, 28 times versus 14. The largest group of recommendations fully agreed with the present emphasis on inclusion models, RSDS, and modifications being made so that students could stay where they were seen as belonging, in their own regular education classes where they could benefit from contact with role-model peers. The self-contained BD teachers supported the full range of integration possibilities but also noted that reentry into the mainstream should not be insisted upon and is not always best for all children. Several groups recommended that there be more teaming and better communication between special and regular education teachers. BD teachers suggested that all teachers deal with BD youngsters for part of the day.

12. **Evaluation, identification, and diagnosis:** activities around the clarification that a student's needs are significant and must be individually addressed. A number of groups emphasized the importance of going beyond mere test results to look for causes and patterns of problems. Parents of the non-identified children dreaded the BD label and spoke of it as something that concealed or prevented the assessment of a child's true problems. They were even more sensitive to having their children labeled *bad* year after year; the two labels, *bad* and *BD*, were clearly related in their view.

13. **Interventions to correct behavior problems:** such as individualized or group classroom management systems or behavioral contracts. Although very specific descriptions of formalized behavior management systems were described as key elements of present programming, no specific system was mentioned as part of the ideal Iowa program. Individual management plans in general as well as such specific individualized techniques as contracting, behavior monitoring, and giving specific feedback to students about their behaviors were listed as desirable practices. Many interventions are mentioned as currently available. This category placed fourth in the rank order of categories of present practices.

14. **Support from teams assembled within the schools:** for planning, child study, student or teacher assistance; items in this category, again, were mentioned more frequently as elements of present than of ideal programming. Teams are one present arrangement that is thought of very favorably. The key issue here was articulated by several groups: *all* need to know, support , and work on the plan for a student—school, home, AEA, involved agencies. Frequent open interactions and teamwork are essential characteristics of such a working group which some teachers referred to as the student's *support cadre*.

15. **The need for early identification and service:** for students and families in need. Another element with 17 nominations by Focus Groups is proper timing of evaluations and interventions. It goes without saying that the proper timing is *early*. Note, however, that this view is not in agreement with that previously expressed by parents of regular education children that labeling and placing a

child should not be rushed into prematurely.

16. **Special education** as a needed resource for some students. This has the distinction of placing first among all 19 elements, apparently the most common present response to behaviorally difficult students. A total of 71 opinions were that, in schools at present, our four vignette students would be placed into one or another special education program within the full range of special education placements, resource rooms through 3.4 weighted classes.

17. **Special schools and programs to meet specialized needs** such as magnet schools, alternative schools, classes for gifted and at-risk students. Drop-in centers and summer school were mentioned as present and/or ideal options for students needing assistance. During discussions, talk of these options took up significant amounts of time, and people from communities that did not have an alternative school within a reasonable distance expressed feelings of being shortchanged by the system. At-risk programs of some kind, by contrast, were available almost everywhere.

18. **Responses made to students' negative, troublesome, or disruptive behaviors**

19. **Responses made to students' positive, creative, or pro-social behaviors:** The lowest two ranking categories of ideal programming, these categories present a telling contrast in terms of present programming where negative responses are second only to special education placements as the most frequently mentioned element of education for students with behavioral problems. Only the parents of the regular education youngsters mentioned tangible rewards for positive behaviors as ideal—stickers on shirts or stamps on hands. The repudiation of the heaping on of punitive responses as the solution to these problems was striking.

| | RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR | |
|---|---|---|
| | POSITIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIORS | NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIORS |
| PRESENT PROGRAMMING | 7 | 46 |
| IDEAL PROGRAMMING | 6 | 7 |

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR
FOR PRESENT AND IDEAL PROGRAMMING

## Observations

As we prepared this project, we tried to find ways to focus our groups on realistic life stories of realistic children and teenagers. We wanted to give participants situations to respond to that were typical of their everyday experience with students, not set them up to respond to the overwhelming problems of Today's Youth in their headlined dimensions. The result was that there was there was little hand-wringing, fist-shaking, or finger-pointing. There were critical thinking and plenty of criticism and frustration over knowing what to do but not having the time or the things or the people needed to get them done. The groups seemed to us to be remarkable for their innovation, concern, educational astuteness, and expectation that Iowa can and will do well by these challenging students.

Following are major themes that sounded through these hours of discussion. We hope that readers will sample the actual words of Focus Group members in the full report of this project.

### Parent Involvement

That parents and educators would enter into a genuine full partnership on behalf of their children was the most universally expressed desire among all Focus Groups. To achieve this, many of the solutions fall into the domain of attitude change; people seek more trust, honesty, respect from each other, willingness to see things each others' ways and to understand. Much will require the resource of added time, either through reduced teaching loads and paperwork or by having time structured into a week specifically for meetings, visits, phone calls, and frequent individualized progress checks.

### Curriculum Transformation

Transformation, not just tinkering or adding sections or finding new ways to grant Carnegie units, was another virtually universal response the questions we posed. Both general and special educators as well as administrators suggested such nontraditional solutions as non-graded schools, changes in the timing for and assessment of readiness for graduation (e.g., portfolios in place of credit accumulations and letter grades) flexible criteria, classes organized on the basis of developmental needs rather than on birth date and performance on standardized criteria, more experiential learning, more sharing of learning experiences among peers as well as with community resources and off-campus opportunities.

*Preparation* was a concept that was almost completely focused on the sense of preparation for community life and work, not on college preparation, the traditional standard for judging schools and, in some schools, the focus of much or most school counselors' work. Tomorrow's school curricula

will reflect and be on a continuum with community life experienced in tomorrow's world.

**Roles of Special and General Education**

It seemed clear to us that our groups were not focussing on the needs of one, essentially homogeneous group of students as they considered what to do for students with social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties, certain individuals simply having more of or fewer of the same problems than others. Those concerned with students with severe problems, severe enough to have brought them to the regular attention of social, legal, medical, or mental health professionals, wanted specialized settings with highly trained staff as the primary educators. Those with children whose problems could be described as being relatively mild wanted to keep students out of special pullout programs altogether. Where the line between these two groups, severe and mild, is drawn seemed to us to depend as much on the schools' policies, climate, availability of helping professionals, flexibility of offerings, and skill in working with troubled students as upon the characteristics of the students' themselves.

Tomorrow's schools will need to provide more service for students with more diverse needs than ever. It will be a challenge not to eliminate so many community schools' pullout programs for severely involved youngsters that the only recourse is to seek schooling connected with in- or out-of-state residential treatment facilities. With spending and placement caps reducing the beds available for that kind of care, we risk creating a condition of widespread school-lessness.

**Teamwork, Helpers, Warmth, and Individualized Concern**

**Teamwork**—school and family, school and business, school and social networks, school and mental health providers—many configurations were talked about, none of them on the hierarchical model of the organization chart, but sprawling sideways with connections everywhere. The adage that *it takes a village to raise a child* came constantly to mind. In the village that was imagined, the school was in the center, using and including all the resources it takes to do enough to help the students we are concerned about.

**Helpers**—people are the main resources needed, more people than professional educators in their schools. Mentoring programs linking students with adults or peers in or outside the school were highly thought of. Peer tutors, peer counselors, transition aides, teacher mentors, bus helpers, job overseers, grandmothers, recess guides, student buddy systems—any number of willing volunteers or people able to accept more modest pay than trained educators would be welcome. The requirement that complicates this picture and that was continually stressed in Focus Groups was that *all of these helping individuals must be well trained*, and they must be really interested in the student or students they are to work with. Unfettered, misguided volunteerism can be worse than no help at all, and the

need for training, even among those already trained as BD teachers, is among the strongest recommendations made by Groups.

**Personal warmth and care** — Focus Group participants' ideas for making Iowa's schools ideal were focused on creating successful, *meaningful* school experiences that would fit even those students who did not themselves fit existing school molds. Concern about the numbers of students who *fall through the cracks* was frequently voiced. Some parents noted bitterly that until and unless a child is aggressive, he or she is unlikely to receive needed attention. Focus Groups expressed little interest in structured management systems set up for an entire school—they want time enough to talk with helpers and mentor students one at a time.

**Alternative School Programming**

A desire for an alternative school setting was almost universal among the educators in our groups. Because of the focus on this option for students with behavior problems, we assembled a group of ten high-schoolers from Iowa City's alternative school so we could describe their perspectives on their perspectives on their school. Their excitement about learning, the value they place on their relationships with teachers whom they respect and who respect them, and their internalized motivation as they see themselves making progress toward their life goals are excellent endorsements.

**Resources**

Participants found thinking about the ideal without budgetary constraints almost too unfamiliar a process to handle; they were bitterly aware of reality in which, instead of looking forward to such possibilities, they fear losing present resources. Time, money, and smaller class sizes were the most frequently mentioned resources lacking now and most needed. Training for themselves, their colleagues, other helpers, and parents is an almost universally desired resource, but when to find the time and money to do it effectively enough or widely enough to effect change is unknown. Special staff and volunteers are seen as ways to augment programs or develop more options for and focused concern on students with behavioral problems. Again, money to hire them and train them and organize them is not presently available without reducing existing staff positions, and any further increase of teachers' class loads is seen as intolerable. Finally, special facilities such as alternative schools, vocational settings, or fine-arts schools are wanted so that all Iowa students, not merely those close to large metropolitan centers, can make use of them. The inequities in programming between rural and urban children is strongly felt. Tomorrow's schools can only become as fine as our Focus Groups' visions for them if they have the resources necessary to create them. Certainly the will is there, the need is there, and the concern for these students is deeply felt..

# PART I: OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Focus Groups are discussion groups of eight or so people who have a profession, status, or interest in common. Eleven such groups met in five Iowa cities during the spring and fall of 1993. A wealth of ideas was generated by people taking time away from ordinary routines to think together about a shared concern. To begin this report, we will describe how Iowa services to young people with significant personal and interpersonal problems might look if the ideas generated in Focus Groups were suddenly to become reality.

Assembling and ordering all the ideas from our eleven groups was an activity of sifting and shifting. Over time, key elements emerged as the nineteen topics of chief significance, categories into which all the ideas could be gathered and scrutinized. Here, in order of their frequency of nomination as essential considerations for ideal programming, are the nineteen key elements:

1. **parent involvement:** participating with the schools in a shared enterprise of fostering children's growth and learning;
2. **the role of academics:** the curriculum, graduation requirements, grading, groupings—the content and procedures of education;
3. **resources:** time, money, staff, facilities—the wherewithal necessary for ideas to materialize into programs;
4. **social and emotional needs of students:** helping them with their thoughts and feelings, their personal and interpersonal conflicts;
5. **the education and training of school staff:** regular education teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, bus drivers, associate teachers, everyone;
6. **support and involvement from community resources:** human services agencies, mental health centers, police, recreational facilities, businesses;
7. **professional support within the school domain:** from AEA social workers, consultants, and psychologists as well as from school counselors and behavior interventionists;
8. **support from nonprofessional educators:** within the school community, chiefly from trained aides or associates but also from a variety of students and adults who serve as mentors, counselors, or general support people for students;

9. **the training and education of parents:** about their role in consistent programming and about parenting techniques in general;
10. **issues of school and district policy:** basic principals or procedures that were articulated as policy and carried out throughout an entire system;
11. **regular education:** as the home-base for students and programming;
12. **evaluation, identification, and diagnosis:** activities around the clarification that a student's needs are significant and must be individually addressed;
13. **interventions to correct behavior problems:** such as individualized or group classroom management systems or behavioral contracts;
14. **support from teams assembled within the schools:** for planning, child study, student or teacher assistance;
15. **the need for early identification and service:** for students and families in need;
16. **special education:** as a needed resource for some students
17. **special schools and programs to meet specialized needs:** such as magnet schools, alternative schools, classes at varying difficulty levels;
18. **responses made to students' negative, troublesome, or disruptive behaviors;**
19. **responses made to students' positive, creative, or prosocial behaviors.**

The Focus Groups had two opportunities to summarize their thinking: first, they met in subgroups to prioritize the lists of issues they had generated in open discussions and nominate key issues as being especially important; second, their final activity of the day was for individual participants to write their own summarizing thoughts on where Iowa schools were now and what they needed to do to move forward. It is these summarizing statements that are here finally summarized together, categorized, and counted for this report. The conversations that generated these lists of key elements were no less important than the summaries of them, and comments and perspectives from all group activities are woven throughout this initial overview of Focus Group opinion.

From the 19 elements, each described individually later in this report, eight major themes emerged as essential considerations for Iowa as we work to create the ideal school experience for our children and youth with behavioral problems, whether those be behaviors that are disruptive to others or behaviors primarily to themselves.

## Parents

In tomorrow's schools, the defensive haggling and finger pointing over whose fault it is, families' or schools' — that American youths do not measure up with those from other developed nations, or that disciplinary standards are lacking or futile, or that society has grown more violent, or that young people with emotional and behavioral problems face the future with poor skills and discouraged spirits --all this will have stopped. The most universally expressed desire among our all Focus Groups was that schools and families enter into a partnership, a "comradely relationship" as one mother phrased it. The affect with which this was expressed varied from irritability and exasperation phrased it. The affect with which this was expressed varied from irritability and exasperation from across the two sides of the parent/school fence toward the opposing sides (in both directions), through yearning wistfully for an ideal, to excitement and eagerness about the possibilities of truly working as partners.

Some of what it will take to achieve this falls in the domain of attitude change; people seek more trust, honesty, respect from each other, willingness to see things each others' ways and to understand. Much will require the resource of added time, either through reduced teaching loads and paperwork or by having time structured into a week specifically for meetings, visits, phone calls, and frequent individualized progress reports.

In parents desire for communication about what's right as well as what's wrong lies, perhaps, the key to true partnership. A number of educators mentioned arrangements whereby parents carried out reward systems at home for the good things young children had done at school, either as a present or an ideal component of work on behavior problems. Such contracts or systems are helpful, but our sense was that parents wanted involvement beyond simply carrying out what teachers, counselors, or principals want them to do. Do schools set up systems, for instance, to reinforce at school children's good behaviors that parents report from home? Partnership implies mutuality of concern. Parents said they wanted their experiences with their children, their observations about what is and is not likely to make things better, their explanations as to how troublesome behaviors got started, their family histories, their advice garnered from outside experts they had sought help from, truly heard and incorporated into the schools' programs for their youngsters.

## Academics And School Curriculum

Tomorrow's school curricula will reflect and be on a continuum with community adult life experienced in tomorrow's world. Focus Group participants were not set on maintaining the status quo. When discussing the needs of students with behavioral problems, these educators and parents did not hearken Back to Basics or despair over American students' relative academic weaknesses.

The concept of devising educational plans to meet diverse needs of all students, including the ones with academic, adjustment, or conduct problems, was the strong current throughout all these groups.

Both general and special educators as well as administrators suggested such nontraditional solutions as non-graded schools, changes in the timing for and assessment of readiness for graduation (e.g., portfolios in place of credit accumulations and letter grades) flexible criteria, classes organized on the basis of developmental needs rather than on birth date and performance on standardized criteria, more experiential learning, more sharing of learning experiences among peers as well as with community resources, off-campus opportunities.

Preparation was a concept that was almost completely focused on preparation for community life and work, not on college preparation, the traditional standard for judging schools and, in some schools, the focus of much or most school counselors' work. Special educators frequently nominated vocational preparation and transition planning as important; regular educators' and administrators' ideas clustered more around rearrangements of academic offerings, methods, and criteria to make classes and courses more motivating and diverse, graduation within the range of everyone. Parents wanted more individualized modifications to meet their children's needs, talents, and abilities; the parents of the non-identified students perceived that the degree to which their children are motivated by creative, interesting classes makes a great difference in their behavior and success.
The school administrators' group did discuss the problems of having diverse criteria for grades or graduation operating in schools, expressing the concern that the achievements of able learners who did not experience serious personal or interpersonal conflicts would be diminished if diplomas were earned in ways requiring less scholastic excellence or good school citizenship; their worries, however, were not so strong that they were among their lists of key issues.

As we think back on the total experience and read articles about education in Iowa newspapers, we recognize that our Focus Groups were sharply focused, for their two hours together, exclusively on the needs of the kinds of students we showed in our vignettes. Just how the changes needed to meet their needs will be balanced with the more widely publicized needs to advance academic preparedness and excellence to complete with Japan and Western Europe was never discussed. The difficult challenge will be to maintain the focus on educating all Iowa students, including those with learning difficulties and/or norm-breaking behaviors, in times when resources are being allocated and curriculum designed to improve academic excellence and preparedness for intellectual and scientific competition in the developed world. Were Iowa to respond to calls for excellence merely by increasing the rigors of traditional schooling, upgrading math, science, and foreign language curricula and graduation requirements, we would risk doing so on the backs of the half of Iowa students

below 50th percentile on Iowa norms. Among these students are the majority who will not go on to post-secondary education. For these students, secondary school is the social institution with the greatest potential for providing instruction and practice in the basic life skills needed to live responsibly and with reasonable satisfaction in our difficult society, including skills of handling personal stress and interpersonal conflict.

**The Roles of Special and General Education**

We heard two strong, general points of view in this area: one holds that very special education is what is needed to provide students with technically expert teaching, adequate teacher time, and the skills in interpersonal living that they must have to survive in life. The other holds that regular education is where real life is lived for children and that taking them from regular classrooms diminishes their status and deprives them of opportunities to interact with students who are not defined as handicapped.

Our two parent groups made a particularly striking contrast on this issue. The parents whose children received special services for behavioral disorders felt strongly that the movement toward greater inclusion of disabled students in mainstream classes denied their children services they require to make maximum progress. The parents of the unidentified students with behavior problems were very leery of labels and expressed worries about their children carrying on a reputation of being "trouble" forever. They feared that other youngsters in the family, even subsequent generations of children, would also be looked down upon by teachers.

It seemed clear to us that our groups were not focussing on the needs of one, essentially homogeneous group of students with certain individuals simply having more of or fewer of the same problems and needs than others. Those concerned with students with severe problems, severe enough to have brought them to the regular attention of social, legal, medical, or mental health professionals, wanted specialized settings with specially trained staff as the primary locus of these students' education. Those with children whose problems could be described as being relatively mild wanted to keep students out of special pullout programs altogether. Where the line between these two groups, severe and mild, is drawn seemed to us to depend as much on the schools' policies, climate, availability of helping professionals, flexibility of offerings, and skill in working with troubled students as upon the characteristics of the students' themselves.

Educators' perspectives varied with their particular job experiences. What special education teachers held in common was an urgent desire for more participation with regular educators as colleagues, team-teachers, and sharers in individual program planning. Like parents, they felt they had too

little positive, proactive communication with mainstream educators. They were generally confident of their helping roles, whether they were in the most restrictive settings such as hospital classrooms or the least restrictive RSDS programs.

There was general agreement that research and experience have resulted in a true technology and set of special listening and speaking skills for working with students with behavioral and emotional disabilities; presumably these are the skills that so many urged be taught in the staff training called for by our Focus Group members. In the view of many, specialized help was too sorely needed by many students and demanded by experienced parents to abandon for inclusion in mainstream only for the sake of social inclusion.

Much of this technology and art, however, is as valuable for general education as for special education. That is where another key element comes into play -- the training of all school staff to work with students who present behavior problems. On pre-service and inservice bases, this was ranked fifth among 19 elements by Focus Groups overall. Interestingly, the one group who did not perceive teacher training to be important enough to nominate was the regular education teachers, although regular education staff were perceived as being very much in need of training by all other groups.

As our Focus Groups seemed to perceive the future, tomorrow's schools will not deal with the issue of special education versus regular education as an either/or, versus issue at all. Among the flexible options within all school districts will be some especially helpful to students with serious psychiatric or social disorders. Some children will continue to need more specialized teaching and management than will ever be reasonable for regular education teachers (and the ever-widening range of students with diverse needs that they are responsible for) to include routinely in their midst. At present, residential educators said they are finding it harder and harder to find placements for severely disordered students in community settings because school districts, newly focused on inclusion programs, were not able also to meet specialized needs for special education. Day treatment in mental health facilities, special site school programs, or programs coordinated with other community care facilities are valuable options represented by some of our Focus Group teachers and suggested by others. It will be difficult to make care needed by the most seriously disordered children and young people available in all areas of the state.

Tomorrow's schools will need to provide more service for students with more diverse needs than ever. It will be a challenge not to eliminate so many community schools' pullout programs for severely involved youngsters that the only recourse is to seek schooling connected with in- or out-of-state residential treatment facilities. With spending and placement caps reducing the beds available for that kind of care, we risk creating a condition of widespread school-lessness.

## Teamwork

Tomorrow's schools will incorporate the concept of teamwork in wider domains than football, tennis, and debate. The understanding that we cannot cope with, let alone master, our students' problems just within our own classrooms, disciplines, schools, or institutions pervaded Focus Group discussions. Educators highly value the school teams that they have already organized -- Child Study Teams, Teacher Assistance Teams, Conflict Resolution Teams, At-Risk Teams. Parents want to be included. Many mentioned that it would enhance team productivity to include community specialists, workers from community mental health centers, probation, DHS -- whoever would further understanding of and planning for students with needs. One group spoke of every student having his or her own cadre of concerned individuals involved with care for planning, troubleshooting, and support who would meet regularly with and about the student throughout the school year, not just when there were problems.

## Helping Individuals

Tomorrow's schools will be flooded with helping individuals. Regular and special education classes will all have teaching associates, freeing teachers of some of their routine duties so they can individualize, "truly teach," and also work directly with students on problems. Crisis interventionists trained to help students settle a dispute or a loss of control or an act of defiance will be available on all school staffs. Counselors will be freed enough of scheduling and psychologists freed enough of testing and reports and consultants freed enough of paper work to deal with issues directly related to students' crucial daily needs; there will be more social workers in the schools. Focus Groups had many creative ideas for including people other than professional educators in their schools. Mentoring programs linking students with adults or peers in or outside the school were highly recommended. Peer tutors, peer counselors, transition aides, teacher mentors, bus helpers, job overseers, grandmothers, recess guides, student buddy systems -- any number of willing volunteers or people able to accept more modest pay than trained educators' would be welcome.

The requirement that complicates this picture and that was continually stressed in Focus Groups was that all of these helping individuals must be well trained, and they must be really interested in the student or students they are to work with. Unfettered, misguided volunteerism can be worse than no help at all, and the need for training, even among those already trained as BD teachers, is among the strongest recommendations made by Focus Groups.

## Special School Programming

A special set of recommendations for tomorrow's schools is that they all have available to them the flexible program options that are available to urban districts. Particularly valued are alternative schools designed to offer flexibility, student-centered programming, and community-life orientation. A desire for an alternative school setting was almost universal among the educators we talked with.

Because of the focus on this option for students with behavior problems, we assembled a group of 10 high-schoolers from Iowa City's alternative school so we could describe their perspectives on their perspectives on their school. They resent very much having their school shown to prospective students as a penalty that will happen to them if they don't straighten up, and they are very antagonistic toward being labeled At-Risk students — just another negative label, in their view. These negative elements aside, they are by far more positive about their alternative school than any adults we talked with were about their settings. Their excitement about learning, the value placed on their relationships with teachers whom they respect and who respect them, and their internalized motivation as they see themselves making progress toward life goals are captured in the appendix following the summaries from the adult Focus Groups.

Other special programming that affords possibilities for individualizing school and making matches between students' interests and characteristics and their education are magnet schools, special programs run by community colleges, and talented and gifted programs; involvement in TAG would not be limited by ITBS score criteria, and all intelligences would be honored and developed. The umbrella concept over all of these was often stated as working to draw out each student's talents and abilities in ways best suited to her or him, no matter how unconventional.

## Warmth And Individualized Care

With these plans in place, tomorrow's school climate will be much warmer for students with behavior and emotional needs than is today's. It was interesting to summarize responses to negative and to positive student behaviors; in summarizing the ways schools most commonly deal with behavior problems today, Focus Groups named 46 penalties for unacceptable behavior and only seven responses to positive behavior. Their summaries of components of ideal programming, however, named only six for negative consequences, the same number as for positive consequences.

Teachers in BD classrooms hold as a basic tenet of their work with students the ratio of four to one — four positive responses for every one negative — that research has repeatedly shown necessary

to change a person's behavior. For each time someone must be punished (and certainly students need to experience negative consequences for irresponsible or antisocial behaviors), then the environment must afford four positive responses to that individual in order for the balance to lean toward her making positive changes, not becoming more disruptive, angry, sullen, tardy, absent, whatever. If the ratio of schools' structured negative to positive responses to behavior is truly anything similar to 46 to 7, then it is unreasonable to expect pervasive positive change from students. In addition, students with behavior problems are also less likely to receive as many positive responses woven into the fabric of regular school life as they need to promote positive change in attitude and behavior. Good grades, participation in school sponsored special activities, friendliness from teachers, involvement in sports, the joy and enrichment that school can offer — these benefits become less and less accessible to students with problems. Behavioral scientists would tell us that we can only expect, therefore, more trouble ahead from troubled students, not less.

Beyond structured consequences, positive or negative, for behavior, Focus Group participants' ideas for making Iowa's schools ideal for students with behavior, social, and emotional difficulties were focused on creating successful, meaningful school experiences that would fit even those students who did not themselves fit existing school molds. Concern about the numbers of students who "fall through the cracks" was frequently voiced, some parents noting bitterly that until and unless a child becomes aggressive, he or she is unlikely to receive needed attention. Then, in the view of some, the child is likely to be regarded as trouble ever thereafter.

Focus Groups expressed little interest in structured management systems set up for an entire school or community; only three participants were clear proponents of that kind of approach, and one mentioned the ability to deviate from a system as a strength.

**Resources**

Tomorrow's schools can only become as wonderful as our Focus Groups' visions for them if they have the resources necessary to create them. Participants found thinking about the ideal without budgetary constraints almost too unfamiliar a process to handle; they were bitterly aware of reality in which, instead of looking forward to such possibilities, they fear losing present resources.

Time, money, and smaller class sizes were the most frequently mentioned resources lacking now and most needed. Training for themselves, their colleagues, other helpers, and parents is an almost universally desired resource, but when to find the time and money to do it effectively enough or

widely enough is unknown.

Special staff and volunteers are seen as ways to augment programs or develop more options for and focused concern on students with behavioral problems. Again, money to hire them and train them and organize them is not presently available without reducing existing staff positions, and any further increase of teachers' class loads is seen as intolerable.

Special facilities such as alternative schools, vocational settings, or fine-arts schools are wanted so that all Iowa students, not merely those close to large metropolitan centers, can make use of them The issue of inequity between programming for rural and urban children is felt strongly, if with resignation.

**Notes on Overview**

As innovative and adventurous as were many of the ideas expressed in our Focus Groups, participants were still bound by their present situations and limitations. Everyone had fascinating ideas about how to improve what they presently did or what they have themselves directly experienced, but there were few leaps of imagination into new areas to explore. For instance, only one person, a school psychologist, mentioned Iowa's fiber optics network, though surely that has vast potential for training and communication. No one mentioned past State Director of Education William Lepley's idea of assuring each Iowa student regular access to a computer, although the potential for individualization, motivation, and acquisition of marketable skills through computer use is well documented. Finally, though there were many comments made in favor of increased vocational activities for students, a broadly based program of community business involvement with the schools in shared educational enterprise of the kind that is being attempted elsewhere in the country was not mentioned.

The reason for mentioning these oversights is not to fault our participants for lack of vision—we are all too busy coping with our present work and resources to have much leisure for being visionaries. They are mentioned here to remind us all that there are ideas and resources in our world that we have not yet explored, and they are waiting for Iowans to seek them out and use them to realize our ideals.

## PART II: THE FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Group meetings were two hours long. Seated around a long table, the participants introduced themselves and received an overview of the purposes of the Iowa Behavioral Initiative and details of their Focus Group's task. Four short video clips of students with behavior problems were shown, brief background scenarios read, and a discussion held to consider these questions about each student pictured:

1. **What would your schools most commonly do now to serve this student?**
2. **What would they do to offer the best possible programming, given that they had all the resources they needed or wanted?**

At the end of these discussions, the group was divided into smaller groups, each one assigned one of the scenarios. They were asked to combine thinking about their assigned student and, finally, to select from their lists the three interventions that would most typically be used now for that student and the three that would be most desirable. They shared these with the larger group.

As a final activity, group members were asked to write down their ideas individually. In addition to the two guiding questions above, they were to answer the two following questions:

3. **Based on how schools serve all students with behavioral needs, what grade would you give to their performance?**
4. **What would schools need to do to move that up to an A?**

The words Behavioral Disorders encompass any number of problems and degrees of severity. The goal of the project was to consider the full range of problems for students in regular, special, or alternative educational programs; for all school ages from preschool through graduation or termination at age 18 or 21; and for students with behaviors that interfere with school progress for whatever reason — environmental stress, psychiatric disorders, temperament, organic impairment, or combinations of them.

To represent readily recognized subgroups of this large, diverse population and to help group members focus on the same kinds of problems at the same time, we developed a series of scenarios about four

representative students. They were introduced on video clips, and their circumstances were briefly described.

## The Scenarios

Two students, Alex and Joe, represent students whose disruptive behavior problems interfere with others in the school setting.

### Two Students with Assaultive Behaviors

Joe is a heavy-set young Hispanic youth who is roughly dressed and appears to have fully matured. We hear his voice over scenes of urban poverty, including groups of young men hanging out on street-corners. He describes them as acting how he used to act, "going nowhere," hanging out with a rough crowd, until he turned it around at school. His school counselor recounts how he frequently had been truant and was in severe fights that got him expelled, a "bad news" kid. We see him as he is near to finishing high school, making plans for his future.

We learn that Joe has been served in an At-Risk program. His intelligence is in the normal range. When interacting one-on-one with adults, Joe is usually respectful, but he was often been the class clown or troublemaker in front of other students. He has always been very loyal to his friends, and his mother insists that if it weren't for their bad influence, he would be okay. He has served all his detentions and suspensions and has always returned to school despite having been retained twice.

Alex is a well groomed, well-nourished boy of northern European decent. We see him in a general-education classroom where the teacher is handing back papers from a creative writing assignment to her sixth graders. When Alex notes the C on his paper, he protests loudly that the grade is unfair, that the teacher hates him and probably wants to cheat him. He stands at his seat and shouts angrily. The teacher asks an associate to take over the class and leaves the room with Alex. His shouts become threats, and Alex takes a swing at the teacher. The teacher and her aide do a quick maneuver to protect themselves.

We explain that Alex is a sixth-grader, has normal intelligence, and receives special education services as a student with a behavioral disability. His history of having temper outbursts goes back to second grade; angry scenes have become less and less frequent over time but, due to his size, are now more dangerous. He is moody, not well liked by classmates, and gets along poorly at home with his brothers, neither of whom has behavioral problems. His parents take Alex for regular counseling.

**A Student With Unusual, Disruptive Behaviors**

B.J. is a six-year-old with an olive complexion, dark eyes, and dark, wavy hair. He appears healthy and is appropriately dressed for school. We see him working with a teacher and another boy on such classroom behaviors as taking turns, answering when called on, and following directions, behaviors both boys appear to have difficulty learning. As they work, B.J. suddenly and for no apparent reason begins to scream and shake his head and hands. The teacher tells him firmly to stop that screaming and asks him if he wants to go out to the hall. He says no and returns to task as though nothing had happened.

B.J. just turned six, a small-for-his-age kindergarten student. He is described as being an extremely active boy who has a hard time staying still without direct teacher attention. He has above-average early academic skills, but his teacher finds his noisemaking, high activity level, and daily incidents of upset behavior very disruptive to her class of 20. His activity does not seem a very big problem to his parents who are farmers and have no other children, but they have taken him to a clinic where medicine was prescribed to reduce his poor attention and overactivity at school.

**An Artistically Talented, Truant Student**

Stephannie is an attractive, fashionably dressed high-school senior with fair skin and dark hair and eyes. We see her in a general math class where the teacher explains what they will study and the help that will be available. As she talks this over with her dad with whom she lives, we learn that her school history is spotty. She has had good grades in the arts, literature, and social sciences, but has repeatedly failed math and science courses. Stephannie shows her fashion design drawings to the camera; they appear to be of professional quality.

As her senior year progresses, Stephannie is absent for more and more class periods, then days. When she does not go to school, she stays home, sleeps, and watches TV. Although well liked by teachers and other students, she often appears in a low mood, dispirited. She talks with her counselor about taking G.E.D.'s but appears defeated when she learns about the scores needed in math. Teachers support her interest in art and demonstrate concern for her well-being, but Stephannie talks herself and her talents down and acts indifferent to it all. We learn that, in the end, she does indeed fail and does not graduate.

## Scenario Selection

The purpose of using the scenarios was to stimulate participants' thinking about specifics instead of generalities, to include consideration of a wide range of behaviors and ages, and to make issues as realistic and meaningful to them as possible. For this last reason, we varied the particular scenarios shown to groups. For instance, we did not show the Early Childhood group the story of Joe but replaced it with an extra section of the Stephannie documentary in which a teacher Stephannie had worked with in the second grade is interviewed. The Alternative School students also saw that section, and they saw Joe's story, but they did not view the tape on the kindergartner. The teachers whom we met with in Storm Lake who did not work in areas where they would deal with urban poverty did not watch Joe's scenario.

In developing stories to accompany the videotape clips we used, we were careful to describe problems that were child-centered, not characterized as being attributable to parental problems. All parents were briefly described as being supportive of the student and cooperative with the school. We also described all the students as having intelligence in the average range, diminishing differences in ability as a variable.

The vignettes were short, only two to five minutes long. Participants were not told enough about the students to study any of them in depth but were directed only to use them as discussion-starters. Depending on their own experiences and the ages of the children with whom they most often worked, the members of each Focus Group tended to focus more sharply on some vignettes than on others.

We believe that the use of the vignettes was successful in prompting thought and commentary on a wide enough range of ages and types of behavior to be representative of the population of Iowa students with behavioral and emotional problems, in special or general educational settings.

## The Focus Groups

Focus Groups were formed in the following homogeneous categories:

- **nine teachers from self-contained BD classrooms** for students who receive instruction in mainstream classes primarily only for art, music, and PE met in

Storm Lake;

- **eight teachers from early childhood special education classrooms** met in Des Moines;
- **five teachers from multi-categorical self-contained-with-integration (SCI), resource, or complete mainstream (RSDS) programs** met in Iowa City;
- **nine teachers from self-contained BD classrooms** for students who receive instruction mainstream classes usually only for art, music, and PE met in Storm Lake;
- **eight teachers from classrooms for more severely involved BD students in self-contained classrooms** set in schools or in more restrictive settings such as on a psychiatric unit, in a non-school building, or in a vocational training facility met in Iowa City;
- **seven institutional educators from Iowa's most restrictive settings** which house their own schools—psychiatric hospitals, treatment facilities, shelters, and short-and long-term detention facilities—met in Des Moines;
- **seven school administrators and counselors** met in Ottumwa;
- **eleven AEA social workers, school psychologists, and consultants** met in Storm Lake;
- **seven mothers of students identified and receiving services** on the basis of having a behavior disorder or autism met in Iowa City;
- **ten parents of non-identified students** from one elementary school whose children have behavioral difficulties and are receiving school support as regular education students met in Iowa City;
- **ten high school students from an alternative school** who had formerly attended regular education classrooms met in Iowa City.

By selecting these groups, we made an effort to tap the thinking of the full range of Iowa thought on the issues of programming for students with behavioral difficulties. We included representatives from the full range of service options, from regular education through all levels of special education, from the least to the most restrictive settings. All but the last two groups included people from a variety of towns and cities representing both smaller and larger school districts. (The groups meeting in Iowa City, Cedar Falls, and Des Moines included more persons from larger cities than did those groups meeting in Storm Lake and Ottumwa.) Both elementary and secondary school considerations were represented in all groups except for the early childhood and alternative high school groups.

(The Iowa City parents of regular education grade school students had older children as well and shared many ideas about their school experiences, too.) We had groups of LEA teachers and administration and AEA support staff. We heard from parents of identified and non-identified students with behavior problems. Finally, we heard from a sample of students themselves.

It is this final category that we recognize was least well represented by the Focus Groups we gathered. We were unsuccessful in rounding up adequate groups of BD or non-BD students in the Spring of 1993, but as we approached the end of our time for meeting with groups, we felt it imperative to try again. As our meetings had unfolded, a universal suggestion from all groups was that alternative schools be an option for students such as those we showed them. We pursued that idea, and our last meeting was with a group of 10 students from CEC, the Community Education Center, Iowa City's alternative school for junior and senior high school. As we did not have students from conventional schools or from BD classes, the ideas we gathered from the CEC students cannot be balanced with points of view from those other perspectives. For that reason, their comments are treated separately at the end of the report. The body of the report represents a roughly representative look at the thinking of concerned adults.

A final caveat about this report is, of course, the selection factor involved in sampling the thoughts of Iowans this way. Everyone participating had to have enough interest in doing so to drive, sometimes for several hours, to take part in a two-hour discussion. Adults who were not employed by schools or agencies were given a $25 honorarium for their participation; school districts were reimbursed for substitute pay where necessary; the alternative school was given a thank-you gift of $100 for arranging its after-school session; those who drove a distance for their session were compensated for mileage and a meal. For little or no personal gain, the participants in our Focus Group project ranged from interested to strongly committed to exploring ways of enhancing the school experience for this most difficult student group, young people with social, emotional, behavioral difficulties.

**Summaries of the Groups' Ideas**

Each idea mentioned in the groups' interactions was summarized on chart paper as it was spoken. After open discussion about each vignette, a smaller group decided A) which elements of present programming were most significant and B) what were the most important improvements that could be made in the future, given ample resources. Finally, before leaving, each participant wrote down the three overall most important features of present programming, in his or her opinion, and gave a letter grade to Iowa's efforts on behalf of its students with behavioral difficulties. The final exercise

was to write the three things they thought would need to happen to bring that grade up to an A (if an A were not already given).

Following, roughly in order of the amount of emphasis the Focus Groups in total placed upon them as we talked, are the issues that emerged as most important to participants, both as they were nominated in the small groups and summarized individually. The following summary sheets note each idea mentioned as most important either by the group or an individual. Where more than one person stressed an idea, the number of times it was noted; (X2) after a phrase means it was mentioned in essentially the same words two times.

The commentary that accompanies each summary sheet is an attempt to capture the sense of that Focus Group's meaning beyond a mere numerical totaling of the phrases it used in summary. Following are tables showing the 19 elements considered of greatest significance for programming now and in the ideal future. Elements are listed in order of the amount of emphasis placed on them as small groups summarized their discussions of the vignettes and individuals summarized their overall conclusions from the day. As the purpose of the project is to help chart a course for the future, we will list these 19 elements from the perspective of the ideal instead of the present.

# RANK ORDER OF THE NINETEEN ELEMENTS FOR IDEAL PROGRAMMING & THE PRESENT SITUATION

## Element Number One: Parental Involvement

### The Ideal Situation

Parental involvement was listed more often than any other element of ideal programming, 99 times. Teachers and administrators want increased involvement with parents; parents want increased involvement with teachers and administrators. Only the educators from the residential facilities where students' parents are likely to be far away or absent altogether did not list parental issues as an ideal several times.

- Many participants spoke in a general way of their desire for or need for greater parental involvement, of creating partnerships between parents and teachers.

- One group of thoughts centered around parents' needs to find school inviting and supportive. Trust, support, rapport, family ties with the school, less intimidation, more positive invitations to participate in school doings were desirable elements that were mentioned often.

- Many participants spoke of true partnership between teachers and parents. Some suggested that parents be included on school-based assistance teams. Teachers wanted parents to support their efforts and to respond to students' behaviors in ways that were consistent with the school's responses. They favored having parents reinforce their children's positive behaviors at home and wanted parents to recognize and acknowledge problems that they dealt with at school.

- The parents we talked with also felt that there was too little parental notification

and there were too few opportunities to become involved early enough in a problem to help. The mothers of the BD students felt they had to be on their toes to see that their children actually received the services they were entitled to and promised

- The parents of the non-identified youngsters were very eager to participate but expressed concern about how that would be handled and how they would themselves be communicated with and talked about in the faculty room. They worried that confidentiality was not always maintained, that they might be branded as a family with kids that were trouble, that past problems would follow their youngsters year after year, child after child, even generation after generation

- Frustrations felt by teachers were especially strong in the area of parent involvement. A special educator suggested that children lose their special education placements if their parents did not see that they met exact behavioral criteria. General educators stressed the need for accountability by parents and sought ways of seeing that they come to meetings, either by demanding that they come or by rewarding them for coming.

- Several participants, parents and educators, suggested that families' situations be assessed so that children's behavior could be understood in that light. Finding out from parents what was helpful in managing a child and what was not could be very helpful in building consistency.

**The Present Situation**

Parental Involvement was listed 24 times as an important element of present programming, ranking as the eighth most frequent category of response among 19.

- Parental involvement was described as most likely to occur when the student

had been disruptive or was in danger of being dropped from classes.

- Communication with parents about the positive as well as the negative was particularly noted by Early Childhood educators. Administrators and AEA staff spoke of parent involvement in problem-solving and communication. Others mentioned conferences, contracts, involvement, and notification. Regular education teachers felt parents needed expectations and consequences.

- Some BD teachers sounded very discouraged. They worried that schools were failing because parent partnership was so difficult. They held the opinion that students were not presently the shared concern of school and home.

## Element Number Two: Academics/Curriculum

### The Ideal Situation

The need for reform in academic and curriculum was listed as a major element of ideal programming 80 times. Participants were not directly critical of existing courses or programs so much as they saw the need for new curriculum components and academic arrangements needed to meet today's challenges. No one in these groups wasted much time deploring today's changing societal demands or holding to past educational practices for the sake of tradition; they seemed totally engaged in thinking about how change might be most effectively achieved.

- Vocational activities involving true work—internships, work-study, jobs in the school setting—were frequently nominated.

- Individualization was a key word used—individualization of assignments, of requirements for graduation or grades, of school activity, of schedules, of assessment of student achievement.

- Regular education teachers and administrators spoke of such sweeping reforms

in general education as non-graded schools, grading students on the basis of portfolios of their actual work, greater emphasis on nonacademic talents, and flexible time-lines for school completion.

- Focus on work that has immediate meaning for students—on life skills, adult skills, interpersonal skills—was repeatedly suggested.

- Student motivation was seen as being improved through hands-on, experiential learning, cooperative activities, and high-interest content in areas other than tradition academic offerings.

- Consideration of varying rates of learning and of the need for developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for all children was seen as critical for today's students.

**The Present Situation**

Academic/curricular programming was listed 20 times as an important element of present programming, the ninth most frequent category of response among the 19.

- BD teachers in self-contained rooms spoke most positively about what they offered at present in terms of high-interest curriculum, vocational emphasis, and adjusted programs for meeting regular requirement, the specialized offerings presently more readily available in special than in regular education.

- Parents of non-identified students expressed the greatest number of concerns presently, characterizing Iowa schools as "incredibly academic" and noting that parents themselves may have had bad grades and therefore worry a great deal about their children's.

## Element Number Three:
## Resources: Time, Money, Staff, Facilities

### The Ideal Situation

Greater resources of many kinds were listed as key elements of ideal programming 71 times. This category includes a variety of resources, all of which have in common their present existence here in Iowa, but of which, in the view of our Focus Group members, we need substantially more. Participants had very strong ideas about where it might be that money could best be "thrown" at the problems of educating young people in Iowa's schools.

- Equity in resources between large districts and small ones is a keenly felt need as small towns try to meet needs similar to metropolitan centers for vocational, technical, alternative, and fine arts programs.

- Time—time to teach, to talk with parents, to call in expert help, to meet with colleagues, to teach—was a major need articulated by teachers who feel burdened with endless paperwork and frustrated in not being able to do as much as they want or know how to do.

- Trained people—crisis interventionists, consultants, trained aides or associates for regular and special education, mentors, case managers, vocational instructors—are needed to individualize, monitor, correct, and inspire.

- Facilities—alternative schools, drop-in centers, magnet schools, technical training opportunities, fiber optic networks, ample computer access for all students—were not viewed as frills but as necessities for adequate education for the 90's.

- Smaller class sizes that are adequate for children's developmental and behavioral needs, whether that is 16:1 in an elementary class in which children with special needs are included, 10:1, or 1:1 for a short or a long time, seemed a critical element of improvement to educators.

- Money for all of the above, for materials, and for salaries is at the heart of it all.

**The Present Situation**

These resources were listed 11 times, placing it fourteenth in the rank order.

- Some group members listed things they presently did have, such as alternative schools, aides or associates in regular classes, a crisis teacher.

- Others listed the lacks they particularly felt at present such as, again, alternative schools, drop-in centers, time, and money.

**Element Number Four:**
**Social/Emotional Concerns**

**The Ideal Situation**

The element of ideal programming in fourth place in the rankings, nominated in the summaries of most important considerations 61 times, was concentrated work on the social and emotional concerns of students.

- Social skills training was viewed as being an essential component of programming for students with emotional and behavioral problems by all of the teachers with a special education background, but it was not mentioned in these summaries by any of the general educators, administrators, or parents. This is possibly because specific training to help students improve their social interactions has been considered a standard component of Iowa BD programs for the past decade; the Maquoketa schools now do social skills training throughout all their elementary schools daily.

- Other direct teaching of skills for coping with particular problems was mentioned, such as teaching anger control, positive leadership skills, or self-management techniques.

- Elements of general emotional support for students in the schools were frequently named as important—dealing positively with students, dignifying them, recognizing their uniqueness and their talents, hugging the little ones, focusing on their strengths.

- Supportive individuals in many roles were seen as essential to productive school experiences. The parents of non-identified youngsters with behavior problems were particularly aware of the differences made in children's behaviors when they really liked their teacher, when he or she is dynamic, energetic or, as the AEA people said, creative and flexible. (For delightful reading on how important caring, exciting teachers can be to students, read the appendix containing the CEC Alternative School students' commentary on their faculty.)

**The Present Situation**

Components of social and emotional support were nominated 18 times as elements of present programming, placing them eleventh on the list. The longest list of these as part of present programming was produced by the BD teachers at the Storm Lake meeting. These teachers seemed to be particularly well-satisfied with their programs which sounded, as they were described, like the classically well-run, "typical" BD classroom, if there were such a thing.

- Enhancing self-esteem was an important consideration for SCI, early childhood, and regular education teachers; curiously, it was never mentioned in the ideal listing.

- Two groups, the support staff and the Storm Lake BD teachers, mentioned teachers' personal attributes—warmth, creativity, flexibility.

- The Storm Lake teachers, SCI teachers, and support staff participants listed the kinds of therapeutic personal and interpersonal counseling and training activities that best define the unique characteristics and therapeutic offerings of professional level programs for youngsters with BD.

## Element Number Five:
## School Staff Training and Education

**Ideal Programming**

- Inservice, preservice, and training in general comprised the fifth ranking element of ideal programming with 58 nominations by group participants; only one group,

the general education teachers, did not mention the need for teachers to receive training.

- Training of regular education teachers to improve their ability to handle problem behaviors, problem students, and integration of the latter into their classes r eceived eight nomi nations .

- Specific training for BD teachers was mentioned three times, twice to help them work with difficult parents, once to help them cope with the increased severity of children's problems we see today.

- The need for training administrators in schools and at the central office was listed three times, for training full staff, including janitors, bus drivers, teachers, and principals for the sake of greater school consistency, four times.

- Thirty-five of the items called for training of teachers in general in such specific skills as disciplining students privately, behavior modification, crisis management, positive communication, increased sensitivity, and motivating students.

**Present Programming**

- There was only one mention of teacher training as an element of present programming: a parent of a non-identified student noted that educated teachers were a strength of current programming.

## Element Number Six:
## Support from Community Agencies

Mental health agencies, the county departments of human services, probation and police departments, youth agencies, and medical facilities were among those mentioned in 39 items, placing the category sixth in rank order.

**Ideal programming**

- Including agency staff persons on school assistance teams was one way mentioned to meet the widely held opinion that there should be stronger ties and coordination between schools and the other community institutions working with children and their families.

- Strong relationships to the business community as well as to human service agencies were also called for.

- Adults to establish relationships with students as mentors and guides into the adult work world were desirable resources that were frequently mentioned.

- Parents of identified children value medical labels and consultation, finding, in their experience, that they result in proactive special education programming..

**Present programming**

Sixteen items very similar to those above placed this category eleventh among those for present programming.

- Psychiatric evaluations and counseling for such severe disorders as depression were most often mentioned as present program involvement with outside agencies.

- The parents of identified BD youngsters who perceived medical resources as opening the way toward proactive programming in the ideal situation, as noted above, believed that at present, recommendations are followed only inconsistently and too briefly.

- By contrast, parents of non-identified youngsters seemed unsure of the wisdom of the schools seeming to think that medications are the answer to problems.

**Element Number Seven:**
**Support Services: AEAs, Counselors, interventionists**

Number seven in order of frequency of suggestions for ideal programming is service from school and AEA support staff: school psychologists, social workers, special education consultants, school counselors, and the newest addition to this group, teachers trained to be crisis interventionists or other behavior specialists; 37 summary recommendations were for these services.

**Ideal Programming**

- Students with emotional and behavior problems need to have counseling services available to them on a regular basis—daily, weekly, or on an on-the-scene basis. Schools that have to make do with sharing a counselor with another building are

considered inadequately staffed, especially when elementary and secondary are mixed.

- Social workers and school psychologists are also seen to be in shorter supply than is needed.

- BD teachers believe that their special education students should have support services as well as regular education ones and find it unrealistic to stop their support once a child is identified and placed in a self-contained program.

- Newer support models such as crisis interventionists, transition specialists, and case managers are highly valued.

- An ideal situation would be to have a crisis interventionist available in all schools for all children, not just those in special education classes.

**Present Programming**

The rank order of this category among present programming components is higher even than its ranking among elements of ideal programming; 38 comments place its frequency of being mentioned third among important elements of present programming.

- Comments cover essentially the same ideas as those expressed for the ideal situation and in almost equal numbers: 38 for present programming, 37 for ideal programming.

**Element Number Eight:**
**School Support from Non-Educators**

This awkward term labels a group of important contributors to educational programming for students with social, behavior, and emotional problems, the volunteers or paid helpers who in many ways enrich the school experience. Altogether, such resources were mentioned 31 times in summaries, both for ideal and for present programming. Teachers' or interventionists' aides, associates; tutors and mentors, whether teachers, community volunteers, or other students; peer helpers, buddies, or peer counselors; various persons serving as concerned friends and role models—all of these have key roles in the school lives of many individual youngsters.

- Only early childhood teachers did not think to mention such individuals as key elements of present or ideal programming.

- Having associates available in all classrooms, not just linked with one difficult student or serving a special education class, was a frequently made suggestion in group discussions as well as in the written summaries.

- Establishing mentor programs seems to be an idea whose has time has come as young people struggle to find identity and meaning for their adult lives. Suggestions were made as to who might serve as mentors—coaches, community people who share particular interest with certain students, interventionists, teachers. Of key importance is that they be nonthreatening, interested, positive, and acceptable to the students they are paired with.

## Element Number Nine:
## Parent Education

With 31 nominations, this element is ninth on the list of 19 key elements for ideal programming.

**Ideal Programming**

- Parent training was referred to globally simply as that, parent training, in almost all instances. What parents were to be trained to do, how the training was to be accomplished and to what end was not fully articulated. An early childhood teacher said it would be helpful for parents to be trained to be consistent with teachers; two mothers of students receiving services for having behavior disorders expressed the desire to learn strategies for working with behavioral problems.

- Parents of non-identified youngsters mentioned in several contexts that they thought it would be helpful to view videotapes of their children in classes and be taught management techniques using those tapes.

- Regular education teachers made recommendations in this category more frequently than they made any other kind of recommendation. Some teachers felt so strongly about this need that they believed that for students to remain in school, parents should be held accountable for attending classes, even if they had to miss work to do so.

- Another perspective on the importance and present difficulty of successfully involving parents in parenting classes was to suggest ways to attract parents to

participate with pay, providing a meal, rides, and/or baby-sitting.

- The timing of parent education came up in several ways. One person said it should begin with early identification of parents needing help; another said it should begin at some babies' births; an interesting discussion took place on the need to educate high-school students before they became the parents of the troubled children of the future.

**Present programming**

Only one person included parent training as an important element of present programming, a member of the AEA support staff group.

**Element Number Ten:**
**School Policy**

This element was referred to far more often as a part of the solution in the ideal future than it was seen as a key element of present programming. There were 29 comments that were related to policy issues in the school or across the entire community. Only five of the comments made about present programming had that perspective.

**Ideal Programming**

- One policy area looked forward to was broader general recognition of the needs and problems in BD programming, by school people and the entire community.

- Wide policy involving all ages of students in a district, young children through high-school students at risk for social or academic failure, was desired to secure commitment to success and consistency for all students throughout the district.

- Regular education teachers sought community recognition that schools can't do everything.

**Present Programming**

- The lack of policy on how schools would handle discipline issues, especially violent behavior, was noted and was a particular concern of regular education

teachers.

- On the positive side, one teacher described her district's policy that all children should receive help learning social problem solving skills to the extent of scheduling all students in her elementary school to participate in a social skills building activity every school day.

## Element Number Eleven: Regular Education Programming

Regular education issues were named as a critical element of ideal programming exactly twice as often as were special education issues, 28 times versus 14. This placed it in eleventh position among the 19 elements (versus sixteenth place for special education).

**Ideal programming**

- The largest group of recommendations fully agreed with the present emphasis on inclusion models, RSDS, and modifications being made so that students could stay where they were seen as belonging, in their own regular education classes where they could benefit from contact with role-model peers.

- One group of responses in this category was focused on mainstreaming into regular education classrooms from special education settings. Slow, gradual, step-by-step reintegration was seen as most desirable.

- The self-contained BD teachers nominated the full range of integration possibilities but also noted that reentry into the mainstream should not be insisted upon and is not always best for all children.

- Several groups recommended that there be more teaming and better communication between special and regular education teachers. BD teachers suggested that all teachers deal with BD youngsters for part of the day.

- General educators urged that there be more support for themselves and greater consideration of their needs as they try to include BD youngsters in their classrooms.

- Parents of non-identified youngsters in frequent enough trouble that they are considered at risk were particularly sensitive to their children's potential feelings of inequality with other kids if they were to be placed in a special program.

**Present Programming**

- In general, the components of ideal programming mentioned above that have to do with inclusion in mainstream settings were discussed in essentially the same

- Among the losers in regular education, in the view of many of our participants, were the bright children who achieved less well than their potential but who never tested low enough to be qualified to receive the services they were entitled to on the basis of their disabilities. Such students were regularly referred to by many participants as being some who *slip through the cracks* and are lost.

**Element Number Twelve:**
**Evaluations/Identification/Diagnoses**

Twenty mentions of these functions in the programming for children with special needs placed the category in twelfth place on the list of elements for ideal programming; it was sixth in order in the list of elements for present programming.

**Ideal Programming**

- Educators in residential settings and AEA professionals showed a particular interest in this area. They stressed the importance of assuring that evaluations be complete, accurate, and comprehensive and that they include a multifaceted functional analysis.

- A number of groups emphasized the importance of going beyond mere test results to look for causes and patterns of problems.

- Labeling was seen as less desirable than making inventories of characteristics and problems to work on, in the judgment of the mothers of the special education students.

- Though preferring to de-emphasize the use of labels, especially as short-hand

terms for speaking about their children, these mothers strongly supported the need for proper identification, diagnosis, and thereby labeling so that proper program placement would follow.

- By contrast, the parents of the non-identified children dreaded the BD label and spoke of it as something that concealed or prevented the assessment of a child's true problems. They were even more sensitive to having their children labeled *bad* year after year; the two labels, *bad* and *BD*, were clearly related in their view..

- Early Childhood teachers would like to see a way to bypass the thorough but tedious process of pre-referral and referral activities before a child can receive needed services, especially when a child's problem is unambiguous or is very severe.

**Present Programming**

- According to the parents of the special education students, it is the schools' practice to wait to do an assessment until the child is already two or more years behind in school or has a full-blown conduct disorder. They believe that children are shortchanged in not receiving proper diagnoses and that all-aged students are poorly or inadequately identified.

- Again, consistent with their concerns described above, parents of non-labeled children are very hurt by and fearful of the informal labeling that goes on in branding a child *BAD* and having that follow them through school for years.

- A present arrangement is that anyone in the school may label a child or adolescent At-Risk. (For a student perspective on this practice, please refer to the appendix containing the responses of the alternative school students.)

**Element Number Thirteen:**
**Interventions to Correct Behavior Problems**

As a component of ideal programming, only 19 interventions to improve behavior were mentioned, placing this group in thirteenth place in the rank order. Such interventions, however, are clearly the present treatment of choice in schools as 35 comments were included in final summaries of key

elements of current practice. Included in this category are terms commonly associated with behavior-change techniques even though the references are not fully enough elaborated to make certain of that association.

**Ideal Programming**

- Although very specific descriptions of formalized behavior management systems were described by Focus Group participants as key elements of present programming, no specific system was mentioned as part of the ideal Iowa program. Instead, there were four references to *behavior management systems* only in those general terms. Other even more general terms used included *interventions* and *intervention plans*. (Presumably, these *plans* call for more individualized interventions, and *systems* refers to group management.)

- Parents of non-identified children specifically hope that "textbook behavior management" will be deviated from.

- Individual management plans in general as well as such specific individualized techniques as contracting, behavior monitoring, and giving specific feedback to students about their behaviors were listed as desirable practices.

**Present Programming**

A quite comprehensive list of interventions is mentioned as currently available. This category placed fourth in the rank order of categories of present practices.

- Specific management systems in use mentioned were: modified Boys' Town system, the Dubuque Management Plan, and Glasser's management plans.

- General references were made to contracting, individualized and group behavior plans, monitoring, journal-writing about solutions to behavior problems, crisis intervention, shortening the school day, presentation of choices and consequences, point systems, crisis management, and general behavior modification.

- As was their role in our array of Focus Groups, our mothers of special education students gave discouraged, frustrated-sounding responses. In their view, behavior plans were followed too inconsistently and briefly, and little more was pursued

than the law absolutely required. They perceived that there would be little programming even with an IEP in place for a student who was not disruptive.

### Element Number Fourteen: Support from In-School Teams

Items in this category, again, were mentioned more frequently as elements of present than of ideal programming. Teams appear to be one present arrangement that is thought of very favorably; 17 team-related remarks were made for ideal programming, 25 for present programming, and nearly all comments were favorable.

**Ideal Programming**

- The key issue here was articulated by several groups: all need to know, support, and work on the plan for a student—school, home, AEA, involved agencies. Frequent open interactions and teamwork are essential characteristics of such a working group which the regular education teachers referred to as the student's *support cadre*.

- The support cadre's role must include consultation and information-sharing that lead to preventive planning.

- Special education teachers particularly mentioned needing the support of the regular education teachers to make this teaming work.

- Parents are desirable team partners.

- Representatives from outside agencies that have a concern for a given child make important contributions to a student's support cadre.

**Present Programming**

- With 25 comments made about this factor in current programming, it appears that much of this proposal for ideal programming is already in place. This category ranked in seventh place among present programming components.

- There was strong support for Child Study Teams, Teacher Assistance Teams, Student Assistance Teams, Conflict Resolution Teams, and various ad hoc groups that might be formed for specific purposes. The key element here is collaboration.

- Other key aspects of teams, according to a possibly cynical residential educator, are meeting frequently and talking interminably.

## Element Number Fifteen:
## Proper Timing of Evaluations and Interventions

Another element with 17 nominations by Focus Groups is proper timing of evaluations and interventions. It goes without saying that the proper timing is *early*. Note, however, that this view is not in agreement with that previously expressed by parents of regular education children that labeling and placing a child should not be rushed into prematurely.

**Ideal Programming**

- Identify children early, in their early childhood or elementary years.

- Identify parents who will need special support early and involve them in finding solutions to problems early.

- Intervene with children early, before they fail.

- In the view of the front office group, placement in a program should occur early, when behaviors first occur. The mothers of special education students strongly agree.

**Present Programming.**

- Eight comments on timing issues in current practice indicate that the six adult groups who commented on this feature of timing believed that appropriate earliness of assessment and interventions was already in place.

## Element Number Sixteen:
## Special Education Programming

There are only 14 comments in the Ideal Programming column for special education issues; there are 67 in the one for Present Programming, giving it the distinction of placing first among all 19 elements, apparently the most common present response to behaviorally difficult students.

### Ideal Programming

- Four statements favored placement for some of our scenario subjects in 3.6 BD classes; two favored SCI's; an undesignated *self-contained room* was mentioned once as was a *structured class where consequences were known.*

- IEP's are designed for students' success, so students should take responsibility for their own IEP goals, according to the administrators' group.

### Present Programming

According to this analysis of the comments and writing of our eleven Focus Groups, special education is the present treatment of choice for youngsters such as those shown in our vignettes.

- A total of 71 opinions were that, in schools at present, our four vignette students would be placed into one or another special education program within the full r range of special education placements, resource rooms through 3.4 weighted classes.

## Element Number Seventeen:
## Special Schools and Programs

Seventeenth place in the rank order of elements considered for ideal programming is filled by a category named Special Schools and Programs. Twelve listings include alternative schools, magnet schools, at-risk programs, and talented and gifted programs. On the Present Situation side of the table, alternative schools or at-risk programs are listed by all groups except by the parents of non-identified students. On the Ideal Situation side, magnet schools and TAG programs are listed as often as alternative schools.

**Ideal programming**

- Alternative schools made final summaries seven times; at-risk programs, three times, TAG programs twice, and magnet schools once. During discussions, talk of these options took up significant amounts of time, and people from communities that did not have an alternative school within a reasonable distance expressed feelings of being shortchanged by the system. At-risk programs of some kind, by contrast, were available almost everywhere.

**Present Programming**

- In addition to options of alternative schools and support from at-risk programs, drop-in centers and summer school were mentioned as present options for students needing assistance.

## Elements Number Eighteen and Nineteen: Responses to Positive and Negative Behaviors

Originally combined into one category, these groupings were divided into two categories so that they could be compared. They are particularly significant in terms of the learning theory of behavior. The lowest two ranking categories of ideal programming, they present a much more telling contrast in terms of present programming where negative responses are second only to special education placements as the most frequently mentioned element of education for students with behavioral problems.

| | RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR | |
|---|---|---|
| | POSITIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIORS | NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIORS |
| PRESENT PROGRAMMING | 7 | 46 |
| IDEAL PROGRAMMING | 6 | 7 |

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR
FOR PRESENT AND IDEAL PROGRAMMING

**Ideal Programming—Positives**

- Only the parents of the regular education youngsters mentioned tangible rewards for positive behaviors as ideal—stickers on shirts or stamps on hands.

- Another four items were listed rather clinically simply as *positive reinforcement.*

**Present Programming—Positives**

All seven responses are expressed in the clinical vocabulary of the behaviorism-trained BD professional:

- token reinforcement (X4)
- positive reinforcement
- positive behaviors rewarded
- individualized, varied reinforcement

**Ideal Programming—Negative**

Modest proposals were made:

- arrange a cool-off time
- arrange homebound with a plan for resolution
- tell students what they have done wrong
- remove the child from the room before she escalates
- have the child call home from office, say what he did
- reduce force-outs or "semester suspensions"

**Present Programming—Negative**

The repertoire of negative responses in general is exhaustive:

- immediate discipline
- natural consequences: e.g., if one is absent too often, he must drop the class
- if absent more than 15 times, flunk the class
- warnings given (X2)
- children held in from recess
- children themselves or disciplinary notes sent to the office (X3)
- children made to call home from the office, say what they did
- parents have to come in to talk to the principal

- children pulled out of class (X2)
- immediate in-school suspension
- students drop out (X2)
- out-of-school suspension, 1-5 days, depending on misdeed (X6); 10 days for assaultive behavior
- students suspended until kicked out (x3)
- time-out room (X7)
- detention (X3)
- expulsion; kicking out (X4)
- forcing out (X2); "Excluded kids have a hard time returning."
- home bound instruction for several hours a week
- older kids are written off
- students are downgraded before others.

Negative responses specifically for students receiving special education:

- student is placed in more restrictive program
- if student won't agree to special education placement, regular school disciplinary rules take over
- 10 day suspension the limit for special education students: kept track of
- student placed in more restrictive setting
- intervention room placement until calm
- exclusion from the mainstream until in control

## PART III: GRADES AND COMMENTS

As part of the closing activity, Focus Groups were asked this question:

*Based on how our schools serve all students with behavioral needs, what grade would you give to their performance?*

Some people, opposed to or unused to grading in general and to this task in particular, did not issue grades. After some struggle with the enormity of the task of grading the whole state of Iowa, most participants did. The grades given by each group follow. Next to each group's grade list are quotations of representative, interesting comments by group participants.

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**BD Teachers: Self-Contained**
**Storm Lake**

C
C+
C
C
C
B
C-
B+
B-

**Mean 2.3 =**
**Average Grade C+**

*"Actual 'nitty-gritty', practical training — a 'how-to' approach needs to given for all the adults who work with behaviorally disordered students."*

*"I think every BD student should have a psych or social worker services on his/her IEP."*

*"More consultant time — my consultant has been doing IEP meetings all year long, and I miss discussing problems with her."*

*"Schools need to recognize these programs as support rather than as the last resort."*

*"I think schools are doing close to the best job we can with the type of kids we're getting."*

*"We need a structured behavior management system for BD kids that is consistent in grades K-12."*

*"Regular education teachers need to be able to ask for and get help with difficult students from professionals with this expertise."*

*"Offer more hands-on courses to students who are not college-bound,"*

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**BD Teachers: Special Self-Contained**
**Iowa City**

C+
C TO B
B
C
C
B-
F
D

**Mean 1.9 =**
**Average Grade C**

*"Educate administrators at building and central office levels about the nature of BD, expectations and programming needs,"*

*"Try to work pro-actively, conference with students at least once a week, discuss options and choices before giving them a speech."*

*" Call parents about positive things as well as negatives — ask them to give students positive reinforcement."*

*"A lot will depend on the quality of the administrator."*

*"Social skills should be taught on a regular basis within the BD room or regular ed. "*

*"Consult with integration teachers to give them ideas of what to say to students."*

*"Pay parents to participate in parent activities — free dinner, rides, baby-sitting — whatever will get them there,"*

*"Schools have made a lot of progress — alternative programs, jobs, work study, Teacher Assistance Teams, etc. Create more such projects and programs and place more emphasis on them."*

*"More creative credit allowance." "Less sending students out of district."*

**BD Multi-Categorical Teachers**
**Iowa City** *"Schools are failing because it is hard to get parent partnership — problems are not seen as joint problems, just the school's."*

C+
C-
C *"Long-term plans should be made and discussed from one year to the next instead of starting over each year with new people."*

C+
C *"Regular teachers are so taxed with duties and large classes that it's difficult for them to manage behavior, too."*

**Mean 2.1 =**
**Average Grade C**

*"There needs to be more full-time support for counselors certified by grade levels as teachers are. High school counselors putting in a day or two in elementary buildings can't have the expertise."*

*"Time must be provided to inservice everyone, all special teachers as well as home room teachers and recess monitors." "Too much teacher autonomy allows for great variation in how well students are served and allows many to do too little to accommodate special student needs.'*

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**Early Childhood Teachers**
**Des Moines**

*"Continue developmentally appropriate activities throughout the school system (high school, etc. . .)"*

*"Placement in developmentally appropriate classrooms."*

blank *"We need a speedier process of Special Education qualification."*

B
C *"Early identification like Head Start is important, but the intervention and parent focus needs to continue into regular school."*

no grade
B
B- *"Teachers need more money to allow for smaller class size, time for collaboration, materials, etc."*

no grade
B *"Teachers need for the schools to have more money — for smaller classes, time for collaboration, materials, etc."*

**Mean 2.7 =**
**Average Grade B**

*"Reduce class size. With 28 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon and many children with special needs, my class size is <u>too big</u>."*

*"Teach social skills in the classroom — beginning in early childhood — as part of the curriculum."*

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**General Education Teachers**
**Cedar Falls**

*"Allow for smaller schools to have access to bigger school (like) programs."*

*" Work together in an all out effort to really admit we have a problem, and then proceed to <u>solutions</u>!"*

B *"Parents <u>must</u> be involved for students' behavior to <u>really</u> change."*

B *"Help people become better parents, but also, hold them accountable."*

U
C *"Less acceptance of, "Well, that's the way kids are today!'"*

C+
B- *"TRANSFORM!!! In order to do these things, we must tie our schools / parents / communities together and allow them to build these changes into a new educational system.'*

C+
C
C-

**Mean 2.1 =**
**Average Grade C**

*"Send the students to an alternative school so they can work at their own pace. This also saves learning time for the majority of the students."*

*"This is a societal problem / concern, not just a school problem."*

**Principals, Assistants, Counselors, Ottumwa**

*"Make school more relevant to ALL students."*

*"Break the institution of school and offer education based on student learning style."*

B
B
C
B
C+
C+
B

*"More professional staff / school psychologists, educational consultants involved in identifying special needs students,"*

*"Individualized portfolios to include mainstreaming."*

*"Less money, fewer teachers, and more problems is not working.'*

*"We need a time-out room monitored by a trained staff to help the student write a plan."*

*"Training and time allowed to communicate with other staff members to learn how to deal with and evaluate problems."*

**Mean 2.7 = Average Grade B-**

*"A district plan that provides immediacy and consistency that is similar at all levels of school so behavioral needs that are the same are handled the same."*

*"Offer training and help to teachers so they are willing to deal with these students at all levels."*

*" We need more collaboration between general and special education."*

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**Parents of Identified Children Iowa City**

*"Many children need services whose parents are in denial."*

C
B
D
B -
D - F
C
B -

*"Schools need to be pro-active in providing parents with information about their children's rights. Every parent should be given copies of IDEA, ADA, and a copy of the Iowa Rules of Special Education."*

*"Early intervention does no good unless guidance — in the form of ongoing information — is provided to teachers and parents."*

*"Look for the best in individual students before they fail or adopt disruptive behaviors."*

**Mean 1.9 = Average Grade C**

*"Put children first rather than administrative salaries. The fewer administrators, the more teachers and support for teachers."*

*"Eliminate staff who will not respond to their legal responsibilities for the care and education of children with special needs."*

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**Parents of Non-Identified Children Iowa City**

C -
C+
C
C
B -
S -
C+
D
B
C

*"Active and caring counselors are a must.."*

*"We need great teachers with great desire and lots of ambition."*

*"I think our schools are incredibly academic. Grades played such a big role in the way we (35+ age group) were taught that we feared not getting good grades."*

*"They need smaller classrooms so they can help all children."*

*"Don't let problems get out of hand before parents are notified."*

*"Research new ideas, possibly more interesting to children."*

*"Not labeling children with behavior problems, but seeing that they are involved with classmates — treating them equal."More education or experience for staff."*

*"Detect problems earlier. If parents don't see problems, nothing gets done,"*

*"Choices . . . exciting times and fun play times . . . challenges . . .integration with others."*

*"Parents should try to find ways to be of more assistance to the school."*

*"Students need someone they can trust and open up to."*

**Mean 2.3 = C+**
**Average Grade C+**

**Educators in Residential Programs**
**Des Moines**

*"Reduce regular education class size to 10."*

*"Look more at changes the school needs to make for the child versus how the child "needs to change.'"*

C

NI

elementary B

*"Belief that school is for <u>all</u> students and strong commitment to the academic and behavioral success of each one,"*

middle C-

high school D

*"Schools need to make more specific outcomes-based plans for students with more flexibility in curriculum requirements."*

B-

B

*"Reduce plans that force kids out."*

C+

*"Bring the services together—education, mental health, human services."*

B

*"Encourage fewer kids to leave regular ed."*

*"Develop recess plans with therapeutic recess interventionists."*

**Mean 2.3 =**
**Average Grade C+**

*"Life skills instruction for students; how to cope with depression, family problems, etc.—(Improve social skills area of curriculum."*

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**AEA Support Staff**
**Storm Lake**

*"We need pre-planning instead of crisis planning."*

C-D

*"Understanding behavior principles involving consistency and change takes time and direct teaching."*

B

B

*"Give schools the resources necessary to develop local expertise and ongoing staff development. Brief visits from high-power experts are not as cost-effective and effective for students as ongoing, local teams building resources."*

C-

B-

C

*"Allow creative thinking rather than discouraging innovation. Now they say, 'We never did that before.'"*

C-

*"Provide teachers with incentives for working with BD students."*

C

C

*"We need a commitment from administration and staff that all students have value and that solutions are possible."*

C-

**Mean 2.1 =**
**Average Grade = C**

*"Work with the community to have them understand and support instead of opposing education for students with BD."*

---

**CEC Alternative High School**
**Iowa City (Note: Students spontaneously graded both schools.)**

*"Keep from embarrassment."*

| CEC | Regular HS |
|---|---|
| blank | C+ |
| A- | F |
| blank | blank |
| B | F |
| B+ | C- |
| B+ | D |
| A | C |
| blank | blank |

*"Listen & <u>give</u> respect. Don't just expect it. Don't look at children and see 'just a kid.' See the human being as well."*

*"Work outside curricular limitations, on an individual basis, incorporate interest into school—CEC does all of this."*

*"Mutual respect."*

*"Be honest & get students a tutor if they need it, don't just let them sink deeper and deeper like I did."*

*"Make students a part of what goes on in the school and see what happens. Make things on an individual basis."*

*"Friendship."*

**Mean 3.7 =**
**Average = A-**

*"Focus on emphasizing & encouraging a child's accomplishments, rather than putting all energy into degrading them or discounting their abilities."*

# Appendix A

## Rank Order of the Nineteen Elements Nominated as Most Ideal Programming and Most Common Present Programming

## *RANK ORDER OF THE NINETEEN ELEMENTS OF IDEAL PROGRAMMING & PRESENT PROGRAMMING*

### *ELEMENTS OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE TO IDEAL PROGRAMMING*

| Rank Order | | Number of Nominations |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Parental Involvement | 99 |
| 2 | Academics/Curriculum | 80 |
| 3 | Resources: Time, Money, Staff, Facilities | 71 |
| 4 | Social/Emotional Concerns | 61 |
| 5 | School Staff Education & Training | 58 |
| 6 | Support from Community Agencies | 39 |
| 7 | Support Services: AEA, Counselors, Interventionists | 37 |
| 8 | School Support from Non-Educators | 31 |
| 9 | Parent Education & Training | 31 |
| 10 | School Policy | 29 |
| 11 | Regular Education Programming | 28 |
| 12 | Evaluations/Identification/Diagnoses | 20 |
| 13 | Interventions to Correct Behavior Problems | 19 |
| 14 | Proper Timing of Evaluations & Interventions | 17 |
| 15 | Support from In-School Teams | 17 |
| 16 | Special Education Programming | 14 |
| 17 | Special Schools & Programs | 12 |
| 18 | Responses Made to Negative Behaviors | 7 |
| 19 | Responses Made to Positive Behaviors | 6 |

### *ELEMENTS OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE TO PRESENT PROGRAMMING*

| Rank Order | | Number of Nominations |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Special Education Programming | 67 |
| 2 | Responses Made to Negative Behaviors | 46 |
| 3 | Support Services: AEA, Counselors, Interventionists | 38 |
| 4 | Interventions to Correct Behavior Problems | 35 |
| 5 | Regular Education Programming | 33 |
| 6 | Evaluations/Identification/Diagnoses | 26 |
| 7 | Support from In-School Teams | 25 |
| 8 | Parental Involvement | 24 |
| 9 | Academics/Curriculum | 20 |
| 10 | Special Schools & Programs | 19 |
| 11 | Social/Emotional Concerns | 18 |
| 12 | Support from Community Agencies | 16 |
| 13 | School Support from Non-Educators | 15 |
| 14 | Resources: Time, Money, Staff, Facilities | 11 |
| 15 | Proper Timing of Evaluations & Interventions | 8 |
| 16 | Responses Made to Positive Behaviors | 7 |
| 17 | School Policy | 5 |
| 18 | School Staff Education & Training | 1 |
| 19 | Parent Education & Training | 0 |

# Appendix B

## Opinions of Iowa City Alternative School Students

# APPENDIX B
# OPINIONS FROM IOWA CITY ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL STUDENTS

As we did not have other student groups than Community Education Center's (CEC) with which to contrast and compare statements, it did not seem reasonable to include theirs in the body of this report as representative of student perspective. Their input seemed to us to be very meaningful, however, for three reasons: first, most of these students are, by their own open acknowledgment, students who have had learning and/or school behavior problems; second, they speak directly to one of the most frequently discussed alternatives for secondary level students with behavioral problems, the alternative school; third, their descriptions of what they value about CEC match very closely many of the attributes described as desirable for schools by many Focus Group participants.

The ten young people who met with us after school were eager to explain how education should be, in their view, and to express their personal enthusiasm for their teachers and their school's philosophy. (No CEC staff members were present during our meeting.) These students' constantly resounding themes were that their school was a place where they felt respected, where learning was exciting, and where they were working toward personal goals in their own adult lives.

The main tenor of CEC students' complaints about the schools they had left was that they felt they were *downgraded* there or *embarrassed*, two words often used. Several spoke of having had difficulties with academic work since elementary school and never feeling that learning was something they could do well; they expressed resentment at having been passed along from grade to grade even though they had not learned what they needed to know for the next grade and believed that was done so that teachers would be rid of them. Some mentioned being pitied or looked down upon by other people. They insisted fiercely that everyone deserved the right to dress as he or she chose and that diversity should be considered a virtue in school. They universally loathed the term *At-Risk*, perhaps for some of the reasons the label *Pre-Delinquent* was so unpopular a generation ago. They resented being labeled *At-Risk* without explanation as to what the term meant and what they had done to merit it.

What was particularly winning about this group of students, however, was that they griped little about the past. Instead, they were focused on and excited to tell us about what they were doing in school. The most and the least articulate students spoke of their classes as interesting, lively, meaningful in their lives. They value their teachers and feel valued by them in turn. They sneer at artificial rewards and often use the term *self-motivation* in reference to themselves and to what is crucial for students to gain.

The merits these students found in their school had nothing to do with resources except that the school itself is clearly a resource to its community. Housed on the third floor of an old elementary school with the School Board offices in remodeled areas below, CEC's quarters and equipment are very modest. The library houses only a couple of hundred books, most of which appear to be hand-me-downs. Quarters are cramped, furnishings un-fancy, the atmosphere friendly and very informal. Two students commented in our discussion that *no one wants to spend money on alternate students*, and it is pleasant to speculate how far a full computer lab, an art room, music equipment, a first-rate school library, good labs and sports equipment would take these students.

From the perspective of mainstream schools, alternative schools may be, to a greater or lesser degree, valued as much for providing relief from dealing with intractable children as for providing those children with meaningful education. From the perspective of this project, CEC is the only school in Iowa that earns an *A*.

## STUDENT RESPONSES - CEC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

| FORMER SCHOOL | ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL |
|---|---|
| **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT** | **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT** |
| | see if student wants help, then contact parents |
| | students let parents get involved |
| **ACADEMICS / CURRICULUM** | **ACADEMICS / CURRICULUM** |
| letter grades cause comparisons with other students | combine things students like with hard things |
| required ways of doing things, not creative | creative approaches to solving academic problems |
| grades are OK for college admission; not in Elem. | students let teachers know how they learn best |
| kids struggle, can't keep up, feel depressed | teachers look at students' individual needs (X2) |
| curriculum is in the way despite individual help | teachers make learning interesting (X2) |
| students not interested because of how things taught | teachers use a more hands-on approach (X3) |
| prerequisites cause problems | education is personal, not business-oriented |
| technicalities, set of standards must be met | learn more about life than just routine activities |
| tchrs. get into curric.,do it the same every year | teachers use interest in assignments |
| students must understand need for basic skills to care | teachers explain what needs work instead of grading |
| | grades based on how hard a student tries |
| | teachers give students things they'll be good at |
| | change traditional teaching methods |
| | teachers don't expect all to measure up the same way |
| | school plans individualized standards |
| | great extra classes: martial arts. calming, learning |
| | variable schedules, including night school |
| | special classes for difficult areas |
| | teachers show new ways to look at things |
| | many out-of-school activities, e.g., outdoor science |
| **RESOURCES: TIME, FACILITIES** | **RESOURCES: TIME, FACILITIES** |
| no one wants $ spent on alternative students (X2) | adult home tutors and mentors (X2) |
| | smaller classes |
| **SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT** | **SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT** |
| you have just an "A through R" counselor | counselors respect students, don't downgrade them |
| treated as an individual in negative way only | advisor keeps confidences |
| "do what I say" type of authority | individual advisors increase motivation |
| authority figures make formal demands for respect | ongoing motivation, not just "You can do it" |
| teachers don't listen | school offers activities to take out aggression |
| if you ask a question, told "You weren't listening" | child's accomplishment emphasized & encouraged |
| teachers don't believe students | teachers spend more creativity & energy |
| people pity you | teachers teaching, not preaching |
| pep talk at start of school — no more encouragement | adults see a human being, not just a "kid" |
| teachers drill kids about out-of-school information | hire staff who relate to students, care about them |
| you turn off once you can't do it - discouraged | teachers deal with students on 1:1 basis (X11) |
| teachers only concerned to get through class | teachers communicate rather than drill |
| teachers lose their early ideals - lazy, dysfunctional | teachers show options (X2) |
| teachers personally stuck in a rut | teachers relate to students on a personal basis (X2) |
| help comes from friends, classmates | intelligent, caring staff |
| | teachers are friends with students (X3) |
| | teachers and students show mutual respect (X5) |
| | teachers talk WITH students, not AT them (X2) |
| | teachers talk privately about problems (X2) |
| | teachers share personal lives with students (X2) |
| | teachers respect students' rights to be who they are |
| | teachers keep from embarrassing students |
| | teachers are willing to spend time with students |

## STUDENT RESPONSES - CEC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

| | |
|---|---|
| | teachers listen to students (X2) |
| | teachers make suggestions |
| | students are helped without being singled out |
| | students are creatively and individually appreciated |
| | teachers aware of less able stus.,don't put them down |
| | you work for personal challenge, not group goals |
| | cultural diversity respected,not disapproved |
| ***SUPPORT FROM COMMUNITY, AGENCIES*** | ***SUPPORT FROM COMMUNITY, AGENCIES*** |
| college students help | you can talk to people in jobs you'd like |
| ***SUPPORT FROM NON-EDUCATORS*** | ***SUPPORT FROM NON-EDUCATORS*** |
| | tutors AT SCHOOL |
| | tutoring at home - no embarrassment |
| | adult mentor |
| ***SUPPORT FROM IN-SCHOOL TEAMS*** | ***SUPPORT FROM IN-SCHOOL TEAMS*** |
| kids with similar needs grouped together | kids with similar needs grouped together |
| ***TIMING OF INTERVENTIONS*** | ***TIMING OF INTERVENTIONS*** |
| early records are not taken seriously | |
| High School depends a lot on Elem. experiences | |
| bad Elem. experiences - try to keep up, can't | |
| ***SPECIAL PROGRAMMING – At-Risk, Alternative Schools, TAG, Special Schools, Magnet Schools,*** | |
| labeling At Risk causes problems | try to identify real problems |
| At Risk associated with drugs, criminal behAVIOR | notify student if labeled At Risk |
| student may be more At Risk once labeled that way | don't use At Risk label at all |
| students not notified, talked to when labeled At Risk | |
| if in Alternative School, assumed to be At Risk | |
| Alternative School used as a threat | |
| ***RESPONSES TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS*** | ***RESPONSES TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS*** |
| disciplined | steps 1-2-3; but always another chance |
| sent to office | |
| isolated (X2) | |
| yelled at (X2) | |
| teachers invade students' space | |
| teachers respond physically | |
| teachers lose their temper | |
| kicked out for the day | |
| suspended; kept away from school | |
| police called | |
| expelled | |
| ***RESPONSES TO POSITIVE BEHAVIORS*** | ***RESPONSES TO POSITIVE BEHAVIORS*** |
| | set up goals to reach toward, not prizes to win |
| | incentives; work harder, get closer to a big goal |

# Appendix C

## Participants' Nominations by Focus Group

# APPENDIX C
# PARTICIPANTS' NOMINATIONS BY FOCUS GROUP

## *PARENT INVOLVEMENT*

| | *#8 - PRESENT* | *#1 - IDEAL* |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | students not joint concern of school & parents<br>parents contacted when there's trouble<br>daily home-school behavior contacts | home interventions<br>open communication with families (X2)<br>more trust, parent support developed<br>school/family support system<br>contracts with parents to work with school<br>home visits<br>parent groups<br>resources for parents to deal with kids<br>parents' support for BD programs<br>family involved in planning<br>parents' recognition of problems increased<br>parents reinforce pos.school beh. daily (X2)<br>less intimidation: open classrooms, invitations<br>parents involved in IEP's, conferences<br>see that family situation is understood |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | much parent contact if student dropping out | include parents on school team<br>gain trust; establish rapport<br>positive, caring contacts<br>parental follow through at home<br>familiarize parents to programs<br>familiarize parents with how to work with you<br>consistency in parent involvement in program<br>ask parents how child can best be served (X2)<br>parent involvement<br>home-based programs |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | letters home<br>lots of parent contact over disruptive student<br>schools failing because parent partnership hard | call pars.about positives as well as trouble(X2)<br>ask parents to give positive reinforcement<br>follow-up at home<br>parent support groups as for ADHD<br>see that there's close parent involvement (X3)<br>family ties with school; consistent program<br>tchrs. & pars. not blame each other; comradly<br>tchrs. & pars. solve problems together<br>pars. know stus. must meet exact beh. criteria<br>. . if don't meet them, lose Spec. Ed. placement |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | parent involvement<br>parents notified regularly of good and bad | parent involvement (X4)<br>parent support<br>parents' Head Start focus moved into school<br>more contact with families |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | parent involvement (X3)<br>parent contacts<br>parents know expectations and consequences | parents held accountable, preschool on (X2)<br>parents and school share responsibility<br>parent, family support groups (X2)<br>parent support |



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## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

| | #8 - PRESENT | #1 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| | | family interventions, crux of the problem<br>make parents accountable to come to sessions<br>more solution-focused groups for parents |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | include parents<br>communicate with parents<br>work with, support parents<br>talk with parents to prepare child for school<br>parents on team | parent support groups to work with the school<br>parent involvement<br>parents involved in plans for consistency<br>support group for pars.of stus. often in trouble |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | parent involvement | family involvement in school<br>incorporate what works for family into school |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | parents reinforce, penalize<br>parents in to problem solve<br>two-way communication, home/school (x3) | pars reinforce, penalize stus for school beh.<br>invite parents in to problem solve (X2)<br>two-way communication, home/school<br>consultation with parents<br>liaison person to connect services |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | parental notification<br>if parents won't cooperate, BD tchr's hands tied | parental notification<br>parent involvement<br>parent involvement, not just lip service<br>parents in partnership with education<br>partnership to be for child's best interest<br>info. from pars.leads to decisions, options<br>give needed information to parents<br>give copies of IDEA,ADA,Iowa Rules of Spec.Ed<br>some parents in denial, but kids need services<br>parent support groups (X2)<br>guidance for parents<br>schools proactive in explaining parents' rights |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | if parents don't see problem, can't do anything<br>parent/teacher conferences (X3)<br>conferences with parent and student<br>parent/teacher goals set<br>parent/teacher confrontation | more par./tchr. contact, communication (x4)<br>par./tchr. contacts all through school<br>greater sense of community, family<br>get parents involved in work toward solutions<br>pars.need to know what's going on to help more<br>more par./tchr./princ./stu. contact<br>notify parents before problem out of hand<br>early communication<br>open communication<br>excellent communication between parents/tchr<br>daily mngmnt. details followed up at home<br>family assessment; learn history (X2)<br>work with pars. to learn what's really going on<br>video class to show what's really happening |

## ACADEMIC / CURRICULAR

| | #10 - PRESENT | #2 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | | vocational emphasis<br>vocational education<br>meet individual needs, Reg. or Spec. Ed.<br>emphasize life skills in high school<br>administrators understand needs |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | high-interest curriculum<br>adjusted assignments<br>academics enhanced by proactive programs<br>vocational preparation<br>class credit for jobs<br>pay or reference when successful on job | focus on adult needs<br>adaptations made as needed<br>learning environment adjusted in Reg. Ed.<br>total emphasis not academic, e.g.social skills<br>more creative credit allowance<br>vocational emphasis<br>jobs incorporated into school<br>internships where student has to use brain<br>work-study<br>work assigned that student is capable of<br>no grades given for creative work<br>private conferences to evaluate stu.'s work<br>more activity built into school day<br>provide quiet time available |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | great variability in how students served allows many to do little to accommodate stus.<br>modifications in class | Jr.,Sr.Hi learning needs totally restructured<br>there would be flexibility about requirements<br>structure of an ideal learning environment set<br>cooperative learning - enhance self-confidence<br>variety of types of classrooms<br>activities motivate, discourage dropping out<br>Iowa to meet new societal demands,numbers<br>classes designed to fit diverse needs<br>active, frequent changes in activity<br>purpose of hard subjects explained to motivate<br>student hooked by connections to interest area<br>students motivated by working at jobs<br>job shadowing<br>job training |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | more hands-on activities (X2)<br>more small-group activities<br>individualized curriculum (X2)<br>individualized teaching methods<br>individualized graduation requirements<br>developmentally appropriate activities K-12 |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | move kids to academically challenging program | non-graded schools<br>modified academic programs, e.g. math<br>program for non-academic talents<br>flexibility in required courses<br>modified criteria<br>waiver system for credits |

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## ACADEMIC / CURRICULAR

| | #10 - PRESENT | #2 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| | | course substitutions accepted |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | Chapter 1, Kindergarten readiness<br>look at options other than graduation for some<br>work experience program | flexible requirements<br>different time-lines for completing school<br>portfolios to show competence (X2)<br>students recognize their own progress<br>portfolios for graduation<br>menu of graduation requirements<br>variety of methodologies<br>developmentally correct programs<br>assess learning channels for programming<br>meaningful, practical curric. in core subjects<br>tailor-make program for unique needs, talents |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | | relate curriculum to vocational needs<br>coordinate with world of work<br>integrate with post-high school options<br>more flexibility of credit requirements (X4)<br>relate to student interest, goals<br>competency-based curriculum<br>include junior college resources<br>base progress thru school on flexible credits |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | teachers in tutoring center | focus flexible p on<br>increase program options |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | alternative schedules<br>flexible grading<br>flexible criteria<br>emphasis on individ. performance outcomes |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | curriculum is challenging<br>Iowa schools incredibly academic<br>grades in the way<br>parents feared poor grades, worry<br>Chapter 1, extra resources (X2) | challenges<br>make more interesting to children<br>intertwine talent areas with other subjects |

## RESOURCES - TIME, FACILITIES, ETC.

| | #14 - PRESENT | #3 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | | lighter class loads<br>more teachers, psychologists, social workers<br>more time for teachers with support staff<br>time to make needed contacts, locate records<br>time to contact residential staff, paper work<br>bigger classrooms<br>higher pay<br>more $ for programs<br>associates in Reg. & Spec. Ed. rooms<br>mentor program |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | big towns have Alternative Schools<br>" " have drop-in centers, At-Risk Schools<br>1:1 class when needed in early years | resources to develop indiv. programs for . .<br>. . .students' needs with parental involvement<br>time to handle massive amounts of paperwork<br>time to make parent contacts<br>interactive computers<br>more resources for elementary schools<br>trained interventionists<br>adult and peer mentor programs |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | time & money restricted; hard to implement<br>tchrs.taxed - duties, numbers, difficult behs. | time to teach;tchng. secondry to tasks,demands<br>smaller class size (X2)<br>research on effectiveness<br>associate support<br>mentor program |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | grade 3 down,16 or less in Reg. Ed.classes(X3)<br>time for collaboration<br>more $ for materials (X2) |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | Alternative Schools | more $ for small districts X2)<br>equal opportunities for BD stus. in small towns<br>access to better programs in small schools<br>Alternative School (X2) where can smoke (X1)<br>time<br>trained interventionists<br>home/school worker to follow up absences<br>at-risk advocate<br>mentors - partners in education |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | Alternative School<br>associates in Reg. Ed. classes | time for tchrs. -plan, support, monitor system<br>Alternative School in larger town (X2)<br>full-time associates in Reg. Ed. classes<br>mentors - school & community |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | Alternative Schools<br>crisis teacher<br>full- or part-time associates | full range of options in all communities<br>more alternatives for students, Reg.to Alt. Ed.<br>crisis tchrs., recess interventionists for all<br>Technical, Alt. Schools available for all Iowa |

## RESOURCES - TIME, FACILITIES, ETC.

| | #14 - PRESENT | #3 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| | | case managers for all who need coordination<br>Red. Ed. tchr./stu ratio 1:10<br>mentoring program |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | | more school options<br>fiber optics technology for training, collab.<br>video network for feedback, analysis<br>more direct service, support personnel<br>crisis interventionists<br>transition specialists |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | more funding for i.d., intervention, training<br>more teachers, more support for them<br>trained associates in every class<br>alternative sports and enrichment programs<br>Alternative Schools, minority programs<br>funds for extended day, year programs<br>adult mentor program |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | | more funding<br>funding for enrichment, high interest activities<br>research on new ideas<br>mentor program |

## SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

| | #11 - PRESENT | #4 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | | social skills training<br>social skills in BD room<br>needs of non-acting out stu. with problems met<br>break cycle of BD child becoming BD parent<br>more ways offered to play, use energy |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | enable BD student to join activities<br>social skills training<br>discuss options, choices<br>proactive work with student<br>teachers familiar with ADHD<br>teacher flexible to student's' needs | social skills training (X2)<br>social skills trng. with all students, tchrs.<br>out of Reg. Ed. room for social skills<br>daily social skills, anger control<br>improve ability to accept feedback<br>recognize multicultural/multiple intelligences<br>raise self-esteem by recognizing above (X2)<br>make sure students feel they belong<br>positive basis with students, not negatives<br>focus on student strengths<br>identify causes of acting out<br>administrators who deal effectively with stus.<br>teach self-reliance, even from parents<br>provide supportive teachers |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | emphasis on social skills development (X3)<br>entire school involved in social skills trng.<br>positive teaching of behavior<br>counsel for self esteem,depression,confidence | start communities within schools-show caring<br>intense social skills training<br>formal & informal social skills training<br>teach anger control<br>teach leadership skills in positive ways<br>support student to leave class if s/he needs to<br>offer support within class to help gain control |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | enhance self esteem | teach social skills (X2)<br>teach social skills from preschool on<br>teach stus. to take responsibility for behavior<br>teach long-term coping skills |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | conflict resolution program<br>work on self-esteem | dignify and recognize talents<br>focus on talents |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | | teach personal monitoring<br>work on self-esteem with families, friends<br>work on ways to channel anger |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | | focus on child's needs and strengths<br>modify expectations instead of the child<br>negotiation skills taught and practiced<br>direct instruction in social skills<br>life skills instruction-cope with problems(X2)<br>improve social skills curriculum<br>groups for anger control strategies and support |

## SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

| | #11 - PRESENT | #4 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | train in behaviors desired<br>train in self-management<br>creative, warm school adults | student participation in planning<br>more creative, flexible teachers |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | tchrs. & admins. truly partners with parents<br>tchrs.&admins. co-advocate with pars. for stu.<br>seek best in individual, not failure, disruption |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | | recognize talents, expand on them<br>dynamic teachers the key -with kids every day<br>teachers with great drive and ambition<br>more teachers that know how to handle life<br>fresh teachers - burned out ones hurt kids<br>video stu. to show him how he acts, reactions<br>hug children - be physical<br>school and parents set goals together<br>stress creativity, whatever their talents are<br>devise a system to give kids a little extra time |

## STAFF TRAINING

| | #18 - PRESENT | #5 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | | teacher training (X2)<br>more trng. for BD tchrs. in behavior programs<br>trng.for BD tchrs. to deal with BD parents (X2)<br>Reg. Ed. tchr. training to deal with beh. (X2)<br>tchr. trng. for greater integration of BD stus. |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | | all tchrs,especially in schools with BD classes<br>all staff, including bus drivers, cafeteria<br>train tchrs. how to discipline privately (X2)<br>train to increase +commun. between all<br>train administrators in nature of BD, needs. . .<br>" building and central office administrators<br>more inservice for all on behavioral needs<br>better trained teachers |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | | more training in Spec. Ed. for Reg. Ed. teachers<br>teach modifications, behavior management<br>train consistency when handling beh. problems<br>more inservice for all Spec. Ed. and Reg. Ed.<br>train teachers in early identification |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | teacher training (X2)<br>behavior trng. for Reg. Ed. tchrs.<br>train teachers to be more aware of probs. (X2)<br>educate all adults in consistency |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | | |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | | retrain teachers (X2)<br>train teachers to have alternative responses<br>train all - janitor to super. - for consistency<br>train tchrs. for all special needs stus. |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | | train Reg. and Spec. Ed. tchrs.<br>" for more severe problems seen currently<br>provide training in skills, interventions<br>train teachers in crisis management<br>train all school in preventive/supportive tech.<br>pre-service and in-service training<br>train tchrs. in positive management<br>train tchrs. to handle behs., prevent removal |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | | use video for training, analysis<br>staff development for all teachers (X6)<br>regular feedback to tchrs. - not just 1 day<br>train all in motivational strategies |

## STAFF TRAINING

| | #18 - PRESENT | #5 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | pre-service for tchrs. & administrators (X3)<br>more training, Reg. Ed. tchrs. on special needs<br>mandatory pre-service and inservice<br>mandatory trng. for all tchrs. on special needs<br>increase sensitivity to labeled, non-labeled |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | educated teachers | ideas and techs. to cope with, handle beh. probs<br>train to motivate, capture interest<br>more trng. for inexperienced staff |

## SUPPORT FROM AGENCIES

| | #12 - PRESENT | #6 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | intense counseling for, e.g., depression (X2)<br>mentors - college stus., profs., community | interagency collaboration & support<br>more communication, work with community<br>daily work with residential trtmnt. staff (X2)<br>better communication with children's services<br>intense counseling available |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | counseling outside school<br>community hooks for jobs<br>see psychiatrist; follow through medications | agency staff on Child Study &Assistance teams<br>coordinate with agencies to serve students<br>work with social services on independent living<br>tie into as many resources as possible<br>referrals for brief interventions |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | check meds; which works? change? follow up | consistent programs involving community, too<br>strong relationships with business & agencies<br>evaluate medical needs, medications<br>see medically if diet contributes to behavior |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | interagency/team collaboration<br>therapy and counseling (X2)<br>more contact with others working with child<br>more support from other agencies<br>collaborate with mental health professionals |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | | support from the law, the community<br>tie family, community, school together |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | counseling | community people offer regular expertise<br>mentor for students from law agencies<br>agencies help identify stus. with special needs<br>community mentor system<br>school and community build stu. interests |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | evals. for serious disorders, e.g. depression | coordinate services of involved agencies<br>evaluations with indepndnt. mental health pros.<br>interagency planning & coordination (X2)<br>tie mental health, human services, & education |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | info from,coordination with community agencie<br>work with mental health centers<br>psychiatric/psychological involvement<br>work with police | coordination with mental health facilities<br>coordination, sharing with probation<br>coord.,sharing with Dept.of Human Services<br>counseling available from outside professionals |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | pro. recommendations followed inconsistently<br>pro. recommendations followed only briefly | medical labels result in proactive Spec. Ed. |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | medication seen as an answer to the problem | Community Mental Health, youth agencies help |

## SUPPORT SERVICES -- Interventionists, Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists, Consultants

| | #3 - PRESENT | #7 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | counselor sees student individually (X3)<br>counselor does social skills training<br>psychologist involved<br>1:1, 1 hr. weekly: counselor,soc.wkr.,psych<br>AEA support services | daily access to counselor<br>counselor sees student individually (X3)<br>counselor and psych available all day<br>regular psych, social work services (X2)<br>more teacher access to support staff<br>BD tchrs., not just Reg. Ed., get support<br>behavior specialist on staff<br>psychologists are trained to counsel<br>teacher has more of consultant's time<br>IEP's require regular support staff involvement |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | student seen for 30-60 days before staffed BD | student is counseled by social wkr. or psych.<br>interventionist trained in crisis mngmnt. (X2) |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | counselor, social worker involvement | one full-time counselor per building<br>High Sch. counselor doesn't work at Elem., too |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | AEA & ECSE teacher collaboration<br>classroom support from psych, soc. wkr. (X2)<br>counselor runs small groups<br>guidance sessions for whole class | AEA & ECSE teacher collaborate (X2)<br>AEA provides support and observation<br>counselor works on emotional needs |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | intervention room specialist available<br>crisis interventionist available (X2)<br>consultant involved<br>AEA consultant helps set up behavior program<br>consultant confers with parents, student<br>on-the-scene counseling available | trained interventionist works with ALL kids<br>interventionist serves as mentor to students |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | counseling<br>counselor monitors students | more professionals -- consultants, psychs, etc<br>intervention specialist serves as mentor |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | crisis teacher available<br>counseling services provided<br>intensity & quality of counseling vary | crisis teacher available |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | support from AEA support staff available (X3)<br>counselors available (X3) | counseling<br>more social workers available<br>crisis interventionists are in all schools<br>case manager supports, keeps student on track<br>transition specialists coordinate voc. activity |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | trained interventionist works with child | ongoing support for teachers is mandatory |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | guidance counselors (x2)<br>full-time counselor; 1:1 & group sessions (X2)<br>child can talk with counselor about problems | active, caring counselor a must (X2)<br>counselors are able to focus on solutions<br>children can open up to counselors |

## SUPPORT FROM NON-EDUCATORS

| | # 13 - PRESENT | #8 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | associate for Reg. Ed. in elementary<br>associate for identified BD student<br>associate in Reg. and Spec. Ed. | peer groups for BD kids<br>role models<br>teacher mentor program<br>vocational mentor |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | mentor, if student will accept him/her | mentor on team<br>mentoring (X2)<br>peer mentor<br>coach as mentor<br>adult mentor<br>peer tutor |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | | peer helpers, tutors<br>collaboration with associates<br>peer monitors, role models - train, try out<br>associate support<br>peer support study group of 3-4<br>peers call to support, remind each other<br>academic mentor<br>advocate or will fall through the cracks |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | academic tutor (X2)<br>home/school worker to follow up absences<br>mentor - partner in education | |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | associates help<br>associates in mainstream classes | mentors<br>peer helpers (X2)<br>1:1 with peer helper<br>non-threatening, positive role model mentor<br>full-time associate |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | short-term associates<br>associates, full- or part-time | mentoring program<br>mentor tied to student interest areas<br>therapeutic recess interventionist-ad hoc help |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | tutoring center with peers | associates in all rooms |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | peer counseling | trained associates in every class<br>adult mentors |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | tutors | |

## PARENT TRAINING

| | #19 - PRESENT | #9- IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | | parent training |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | | parenting classes<br>pay pars. to participate: rides, $, baby sitting |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | | early i.d. of parents needing education |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | parent education starting at child's birth<br>train to be consistent with teachers |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | | parenting skills taught to high schoolers<br>parent education (X3)<br>pay parents to come to parenting classes<br>make parents accountable to come<br>parents come to classes or stu. out of school<br>pars. miss work to come; it's that important<br>reeducate wider family, neighbors, grandpars. |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | | training for parents (X2) |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | | |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | training for parents | consult to, train, educate (X2) |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | parent training (X2)<br>parent education on BD strategies (X2) |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | | video child in classes; teach parents (X2)<br>parents learn each other at parent meetings |

## SCHOOL POLICY

| | # 17 - PRESENT | #10 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| 1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical | policy re discipline, specific exceptions | schools need to support BD programming<br>Reg. Ed teachers should get help asked for |
| 2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained | | more emphasis on BD<br>more projects and programs |
| 3. Multi-categorical Teachers RR. | school-wide social skills, conflict resolution<br>entire school works on " last 15 mins. | long-term planning, not year-to-year<br>teaming of all school staff |
| 4. Early Childhood Teachers | | more involvement of all leading to consistency<br>AEA, agencies, tchrs., pars., couns.,all . . .<br>. . .communicate & communicate regularly<br>AEA & LEA should eliminate duplication |
| 5. General Education Teachers | nothing in place for handling violent behaviors<br>handle violence only with small child | change in public attitude about education<br>high standards of behavioral expectations<br>recognition that schools can't do everything<br>less denial - "Kids are just like that." |
| 6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors | | immediate and consistent district plan<br>plan for working with BD similar at all levels<br>system-wide K-12 behavior model, plan<br>everybody knows the plan |
| 7. Educators in Residential Programs | | committment-academic & beh. success for all<br>strong committment that all succeed<br>individualized plans for ALL students<br>examine how schools need to change |
| 8. AEA Support Staff | | uniform approaches by all, principal to aide<br>district policy based on needs<br>communication, responsibility, consistency . .<br>. . for all schools-jr.&sr.hi, alt. school, at risk |
| 9. Parents of Identified Children | | partnership of educs. & pars. for child's best<br>LEA committment to best for child<br>eliminate staff irresponsible with special needs |
| 10. Parents of Non-identified Children | | |

## STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL / EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS SERVED IN REGULAR EDUCATION

| | #5 - PRESENT | #11 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| 1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical | stu. mainstreamed from 2.4 or 3.6 programs<br>step-by-step reintegration to least restrictive<br>Regular Ed. with teacher motivational system<br>integrated from Resource with daily checks | all tchrs. deal with kids with BD part of day<br>mainstreaming from 2.4 or 3.6 programs<br>Regular Ed. with psychologist involved<br>go step-by-step into least restrictive placemnt<br>integra[illegible] is gradual<br>no insi[illegible]ence on mainstream; not always best |
| 2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained | student welcomed back after drop out<br>Reg. Ed. teachers communicate with spec. ed.<br>modified Regular Ed. program<br>contract between BD student and Reg. Ed.<br>students integrated in slowly | try interventions in Regular Ed.<br>Reg. and Spec. Ed. educators team, pool<br>real communication between Reg. and Spec. Ed.<br><br>serve in regular ed. as much as possible |
| 3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI | served in their own Reg. Ed. classes<br>Reg. ed. class time earned<br>Reg. class for 1st graders | serve in their own Reg. Ed. classes<br>functional IEP's to ALL students with beh. needs |
| 4. Early Childhood Teachers | full inclusion with spec. ed. tchr. in room (X3)<br>modifications in Reg. Ed. class | developmentally appropriate class for primary |
| 5. General Education Teachers | classroom teacher handles problems<br>accommodations made in Reg. Ed.<br>Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS) | provide more support to teachers |
| 6. Principals, Assistant Prin., Counselors | Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS)<br>Resource teacher team teaches<br>Reg. and Spec. Ed. teachers plan together<br>developmentally appropriate class for primary | Reg. Ed. tchr. & Resource tchr. team teach |
| 7. Educators in Residential Programs | go to home school from Shelter | services received in Regular Ed. class (X4)<br>fewer studs. encouraged to leave Reg. Ed.<br>short-term intervention,then return to Reg. Ed.<br>inclusion models |
| 8. AEA Support Staff | adaptations, accommodations in Reg. Ed. (X3)<br>no adaptations made in Reg. Ed. | more contact with role-model peers in Reg. Ed. |
| 9. Parents of Identified Children | Reg. Ed teachers' role not clearly defined<br>Reg. Ed tchrs. & admins. lack tech. knowledge<br>above ill-equipped to support EBD students<br>tchrs. unaware of charactrstcs., needs, mthds.<br>no service to disabled, bright underachievers | Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS)(X2) |
| 10. Parents of Non-identified Children | | keep students involved in reg. classrooms<br>keep them in activities with classmates<br>treat BD students as equals to others |

## EVALUATIONS / IDENTIFICATION / DIAGNOSTIC LABELS

| | #6 - PRESENT | #12 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | AEA eval if placement needed<br>team evaluations | conduct a psychological evaluation |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | labeled BD (X2)<br>labeled At Risk by anyone in building (X5) | |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | records kept of what works, doesn't<br>pre-referral system used<br>if pre-referral plan fails, child is tested<br>behaviors, antecedents, consequences charted | |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | formal evaluation done for ECSE | bypass slow process for severe, clear problem |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | | evaluate, focus on causes<br>avoid labels |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | AEA evaluates | ask for AEA evaluation<br>determine patterns, baselines for behaviors |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | problem-solving assessment done<br>whys, whens, hows of behavior looked at | assure accurate evaluations<br>see identification as +-shows blocks to learning<br>eval.is comprehensive-acad., voc., psychosoc'l<br>individual needs are assessed and planned for |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | behavior dynamics assessed | evaluate beyond diagnostic labels (X3)<br>do multi-faceted functional analysis |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | wait to assess til 2 yrs. behind or conduct prob<br>fail to identify bright, underachievers at all<br>reasons for behavior not looked at<br>all-aged kids poorly or inadequately identified<br>shortchanged in receiving diagnoses<br>unless labeled, receive limited services | kids must be identified to succeed<br>make inventory of characteristics-not labels<br>diagnose so proactive program placem't occurs<br>educational labels result in proper placement |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | kids get labeled by teachers from past years<br>labels follows kid all through school | students not to be labeled "bad" year after yea<br>kids not to be labeled BD; assess true problems |

## INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE / CORRECT BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

| | #4 - PRESENT | #13 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | progress monitoring<br>contracts for positive behaviors<br>modified Boys' Town system<br>behavior modification system | behavior modification systems in effect |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | crisis management<br>point systems<br>weekly conferences with student<br>contracts for positive behaviors (2) | contracts agreed to for positive behaviors<br>more interventions are available |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | | beh. mngt. systems operate in regular classes<br>mngt. sys. at first sign of recurring problems |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | behavior modification systems (X3)<br>Glasser behavior plans | behavior management systems are in effect<br>Head Start interventions continue in preschool |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | present choices and consequences | stus. held accountable for beh., preschool on<br>interventions to change behavior |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | regular disciplinary expectations<br>individualized behavior plans<br>Dubuque management plan<br>shortened day | individualized behavior monitoring<br>daily monitoring |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | crisis intervention in class<br>journal writing on solving behavior problems<br>interventions to change behavior<br>management plan<br>progress monitoring<br>greatest focus now on behavioral interventions | plan made for unstructured times, e.g. recess<br>problem-solving interventions<br>intervention plan is coordinated with all<br>plan to reduce stimuli for ADHD stu. in effect<br>behavior modification is regular procedure |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | individualized behavior plans<br>group behavior plans<br>behavior management systems (X2) | individualized behavior plans |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | beh. recommendations followed inconsistently<br>behavior plans followed too briefly<br>little more pursued than law requires<br>even with IEP little help unless disruptive (X2) | |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | problem ignored<br>teacher-student conference | the student is given feedback about behavior<br>"textbook" beh. management is deviated from |

## TEAM SUPPORT -- Child Study Teams, Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT), etc.

| | #7 - PRESENT | #14- IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| 1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical | plans made by team | prin.,par.,tchr.,AEA meet often to support BD<br>all professionals work as team (X2) |
| 2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained | prin, teacher, aide work as team<br>TAT makes referrals, work together (X2)<br>Child Study Team meets on student | team approach<br>Reg. Ed. teachers support BD teachers on team |
| 3. Multi-categor-ical Teachers Resource, SCI | Child Study Team meets first (X5)<br>committee works on plans tchr. can use<br>committee plans pre-referral interventions | |
| 4. Early Childhood Teachers | brainstorming before evaluation needed<br>team collaborates with community agencies<br>team plans pre-referral interventions<br>team provides assistance to teacher | ALL on team - pars.,tchrs.,AEA, couns, agency |
| 5. General Education Teachers | TAT (X2) | progress conferences - staff, admin., parents<br>tchr.,prin., parent work are consistent<br>support cadre of school people, family, agency |
| 6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors | Student Assistance Team supports tchrs. | all know & support plan - school,home,agencies |
| 7. Educators in Residential Programs | interminable talk by adults meeting frequently<br>referrals made to Child Study Teams | |
| 8. AEA Support Staff | referrals to TAT's (X2)<br>problem-solving teams (X2) | teams do preventive planning (X3)<br>consult with specialty teams,share information |
| 9. Parents of Identified Children | referrals made to Child Study Team | |
| 10. Parents of Non-identified Children | | tchrs., pars., couns. share creative ideas<br>interactions with others crucial<br>parent.,tchr.,counselor must work as a team |

## PROPER TIMING OF EVALUATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

| | #15 - PRESENT | #15 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *identify when problems first arise* | | |
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | principal makes observations | identify before failure |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | | |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | LD assessed for early | identify early (X2)<br>involve parents early |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | identify early (X3)<br>speed up process to qualify for spec. ed.<br>identify in Early Childhood or Elementary |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | early intervention | involve parents early (X2)<br>identify early |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | early intervention | identify, place when behaviors first occur |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | ties between High School and Jr. High<br>early identification | |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | identify when problems first arise<br>early interventions with parents | intervene early with parents |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | assess early , intervene before failure |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | | recognize BD kids earlier (X2) |

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

| | #1 - PRESENT | #16 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | BD class (X4)<br>2.4 class (X6)<br>SCI (X3)<br>resource room<br>proper program placement | 3.6 BD (X3)<br>3.6 to SCI with regular ed. involvement |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | BD class (X3)<br>self-contained<br>special ed. if student agrees<br>special ed. teacher monitors the day (X2)<br>SCI<br>multi-categorical for part of the day | structured class where consequences known<br>least restrictive placement - plan for return<br>fewer students sent out of district |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | resource (X3)<br>SCI (X2)<br>BD program (X2)<br>referred for special services | |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | special ed.<br>no pull-out programming<br>special classes with 4 to 8 students | quality of Early Childhood programs improved |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | Early Childhood Spec.Ed.with integrtn.(X2)<br>BD self-contained (X2)<br>resource room(X2) | more support is provided to teachers |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | special class<br>special ed. (X3)<br>multi-categorical resource (X3)<br>IEP's (X2) | IEP's designed for students' success<br>students take responsibility for IEP goals |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | BD teachers<br>special ed. - self-contained (X2)<br>special ed. - pull-out<br>1:10 shelter class | fewer students in special ed. classes<br>SCI program integrated with student interests |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | multi-categorical class<br>special ed. (X4)<br>resource room (X2) | |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | self-contained classroom<br>inappropriate services in multi-cat.<br>BD room<br>SCI<br>no services for bright,disabled underachievers | self-contained classroom |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | | |

*SPECIAL PROGRAMMING – At-Risk, Alternative Schools, TAG, Special Schools, Magnet Schools,*

| | *#9 - PRESENT* | *#17 - IDEAL* |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | At--Risk team | Alternative Schools for high school<br>At-Risk Committee review & seek modification |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | Alternative program placement<br>Alternative School<br>drop-in center<br>identified as At-Risk by anyone in building (X4)<br>At-Risk School (in Davenport) | Altern. program for who can't, won't succeed |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | At-Risk program | At-Risk coordinator works with home & school |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | At-Risk program<br>summer school | |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | At-Risk advocate<br>Alternative Schools (X5) | At-Risk advocate<br>Alternative Schools (X3)<br>Magnet Schools for larger areas to fit talents<br>TAG programs to develop non-academic talents<br>TAG program without ITBS entry criteria |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | Alternative School in a larger town | Alternative Schools |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | Alternative Schools (X2) | |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | Alternative Schools in all districts | |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | Alternative School | |
| *10. Parents of Non-Identified Children* | | |

## RESPONSES TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS

| | #2 - PRESENT | #18 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | sent to intervention room until calm<br>excluded from mainstream until in control | |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | sent to office<br>detention<br>drop out<br>forced out<br>time-out room<br>student placed in more restrictive program<br>if stu. won't agree to spec.ed., reg. discipline | |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | natural consequences,e.g.if absent, class drop<br>10-day limit for spec. ed. stus. keep track of<br>3-5 day suspension for physical aggression<br>flunked if more than 15 absences | |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | time-out (X3)<br>behavior slip sent to Principal | firmness<br>arrange a cool-off time |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | detention<br>suspension<br>home bound instruction | put on home-bound with a plan for resolution |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | warnings given<br>negative consequences<br>time-out<br>immediate 1 hour in-school suspension<br>short-term removal to walk-out cottage<br>exclusionary procedures lead to dropping out<br>excluded students have a hard time returning | reduce force-outs-'semester suspensions" |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | | |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | time-out<br>pulled out of class (X2)<br>suspended<br>dropped out<br>suspended until kicked out<br>older kids written off by system<br>expelled | |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | immediate discipline | |

## RESPONSES TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS

| #2 - PRESENT | #18 - IDEAL |
|---|---|
| sent to office; stud. downgraded before others | stud. has to call parents, say what he's done |
| focus on negative behaviors only | student is told what's wrong |
| detention | remove from room before behavior escalates |
| held in from recess | |
| kicked out for a day | |
| expulsion threatened | |
| expelled | |
| parents called in to meet with principal | |
| stud. has to call parents, say what he's done | |
| tchr. handles 1st time;then parents take over | |

## RESPONSES TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

| | #16- PRESENT | #19 - IDEAL |
|---|---|---|
| *1. BD Teachers Self-contained Multi-categorical* | token reinforcement (X2)<br>individualized, varied reinforcement<br>token reinforcement in elementary<br>token reinforcement in junior high | |
| *2. BD Teachers Special Self-contained* | | |
| *3. Multi-categorical Teachers Resource, SCI* | | |
| *4. Early Childhood Teachers* | | no focus on negative behaviors<br>reward positive behavior |
| *5. General Education Teachers* | | reward positive behavior |
| *6. Principals, Assistants, Counselors* | | |
| *7. Educators in Residential Programs* | positive behaviors rewarded | |
| *8. AEA Support Staff* | | |
| *9. Parents of Identified Children* | | stop and give them praise |
| *10. Parents of Non-identified Children* | positive reinforcement | positive reinforcement<br>stickers on shirts; stamps on hands |
| | | |